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SCOTTISH SERMONS AND ADDRESSES

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

Fiction—

THE UNSEEN HOST

THE CALL OF THE ISLAND

Biography—

PRINCIPAL CAIRD

SCOTTISH SERMONS AND ADDRESSES

BY THE VERY REVEREND
CHARLES L. WARR
HON. R.S.A., M.A.

DEAN OF THE THISTLE AND OF THE CHAPEL ROYAL IN SCOTLAND
CHAPLAIN-IN-ORDINARY TO HIS MAJESTY THE KING
MINISTER OF ST. GILES' CATHEDRAL, EDINBURGH

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TO

JAMES AND JESSIE DOUGLAS WHYTE

P R E F A C E

THIS volume is the result of many requests which have been made to me that I should put into permanent form some of the sermons and addresses which from time to time I have delivered on special occasions during the last few years. I have done so with considerable diffidence, for I am painfully aware, as every preacher is, that while a sermon or address may appeal to the hearer at the time of its delivery, it is another matter when it comes to transferring it to the printed page, where it must stand unsupported by that subtle relationship which the speaker may establish between himself and those who are listening to him. My friends were kind enough to say that they thought the contents of this book would "print," though I must confess that I do not wholly share their confidence.

In these pages there is much repetition. That is inevitable. Every preacher has his own outstanding convictions, and these he is bound to stress. We all tend to emphasise what we consider to be the more important aspects of the Christian view of God and man and the world in which we live, and to return to them again and again. If this book contains little that is new and fresh, it may be said in extenuation that there is not much that is new to be said about any-

thing ; but as no preacher can give out without constantly himself taking in, it may be of some benefit to others to read of the conclusions I have reached from my own thoughts and, as I gratefully acknowledge, from the thoughts of many others, so much better than my own. Father Stanton is said once to have whimsically remarked that he disliked publishing his sermons, as people thereby recognised how much he owed to Spurgeon ! My debt to Spurgeon, I fear, would be easily redeemed ; but not so my obligations to the goodly company who have been, and greatly are, my spiritual guides, and towards whom, through their writings, I cherish that peculiar affection which men feel for those to whom under God they owe their souls.

The chapter entitled “ The Inauguration of the Shrine of Youth ” is neither a sermon nor an address, but I have inserted it as it deals with an important episode in the recent history of St. Giles’, and one, moreover, which I hope will not be without its influence throughout Scotland. I am indebted to my friend Sir Robert Bruce, editor of *The Glasgow Herald*, for kind permission to reprint it.

In the case of one or two of the chapters, considerations of time necessitated the omission of a paragraph here and there as they were delivered, but they all stand substantially as they were spoken. For some of the material in the chapter entitled “ The Revival of Worship in the Scottish Church ” I have drawn on my Life of Principal Caird. The introduction concerning

the history of their Order which prefaces the sermon preached before the Knights of the Thistle appeared in the July number of *Pro Patria*, the British Legion Scottish Journal.

C. L. W.

St. Giles' Cathedral,
September 1930.

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A VALEDICTORY SERMON

*Preached in St. Paul's Parish Church, Greenock,
Sunday Evening, 24th January 1926*

And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal.—
Revelation iv. 6.

And I saw a new heaven and a new earth : for the first heaven
and the first earth were passed away ; and there was no more sea.—
Revelation xxi. 1.

I

TO-DAY my ministry of eight years in this parish comes to an end. They have been among the most grave and eventful years in our national history. It was shortly after my induction to this charge that we were involved in the supreme crisis of the Great War, and among my earliest memories of this place are those solemn hours when we gathered here in intercession for our country whose peril had been only too clearly demonstrated by Sir Douglas Haig's dramatic message that "our backs were to the wall." The war ended, however, by God's mercy, in our national deliverance, and then there came the peace. But during the years which have ensued we have often worshipped together in this church under very darkened skies. Industrial disputes of unprecedented magnitude, international acrimonies which threatened the uncertain stability of Europe, periods of economic anxiety and collapse which exercised a serious influence upon the life of a community like this, have been only too recurrent throughout the time I have ministered among you.

It has indeed been a disturbed and anxious period, and it is not settled yet. For now our country is burdened with a trade depression whose resultant

wretchedness and misery are acute. To preach to a congregation largely involved in such matters has frequently been no easy task, for in days like these the man who from the pulpit utters idle or ill-considered words incurs a heavy responsibility.

He that negotiates between God and man,
As God's ambassador, the grand concerns
Of judgment and of mercy, should beware
Of lightness in his speech.

But I have honestly endeavoured to avoid both unjustified optimism and equally unjustified pessimism, and to persuade you of the truth that beneath the ebb and flow of our human perturbations there abide the eternal verities of God. Moreover, I have tried to convince you that the idealism of Christ, His vision of the Kingdom and of a reign of righteousness and peace upon the earth, is not an idle dream or a vain delusion, but is capable of ultimate and practical realisation. All that is highest and best in human nature has in every generation lived loyal to this faith. And now that I am delivering to you this my final message, I wish to attune it to what has been consistently the keynote of my preaching here, and amid the anxieties of these days to assure you once again that I believe that the kingdoms of this world can become the kingdoms of our God and of His Christ.

II

This was the assured confidence of the man who wrote the Book of the Revelation in times that were considerably darker than our own. The value of his message and his vision is not impaired because his identity is impossible to determine; and indeed, as Emerson observed, the nobler the truth or sentiment, the less imports the question of authorship. He was an exiled Christian believer who, because of his faith, had been banished to the lonely island of Patmos. And

there, in the solitariness of his isolation, he had the heroic courage and splendour of faith to compose this majestic conception of a victorious Christ. When he wrote these words the Christian Church was represented by some scattered handfuls of harassed and hunted Syrian fishermen and the like, together with their converts, oppressed and persecuted beneath the growing hostility of the power of Imperial Rome, and preaching here and there to incredulous and cynical audiences a preposterous story about some man they had known who had risen from the dead. Yet in spite of and in defiance of circumstances this man on Patmos dreamed a great dream, and in his soul he knew it to be true. In his soul he knew that to the martyred Galilean peasant was coming the sceptre of an eternal and universal dominion !

Down the vistas of the future roved his piercing eye. He saw the imperialism of Rome fade like the dawn-mist before the rising sun, saw the vast political and military fabric of the Caesars crumble into dust but the Carpenter of Nazareth rise enthroned to a kingdom which would have no end, and saw too the vision of a new heaven and a new earth where either the sea would have become clear as crystal or there would be no more sea at all. In other words, he visualised the eventual advent of a condition of human society purified, perfected, and irradiated with the spirit of Christ, in which man at last would be emancipated by the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit from his follies, sorrows, selfishness, and sin, and would thereby be freed for ever from the saddest and most desolating of mortal experiences, which is the pain of separation.

Sit now, in imagination, beside that dreamer of antiquity on some rock by the shore of Patmos. At once you will see the working of his mind. He is obsessed by the sea. But to him it has no beauty, and he is deaf to its incommunicable music which every true islander knows and loves. It is grim, forbidding,

fraught with melancholy and despair. "Calm," it might be, "as a cradled child in dreamless slumber bound," as Shelley once described it, and mantled with sapphire beauty in the blazing eastern sunlight, or dark and grey and angry beneath a sullen sky—it is all the same to him. There is nothing in it of romance or majesty, poetry or grandeur. He hates it with a bitter hatred. It is his remorseless gaoler, merciless, cruel, cold, inhuman, and indifferent to every longing of his soul.

And as he gazed upon its trackless wastes his hatred deepened in its intensity. It held him there remote, alone. It exiled him from everything and everyone. Its malignant waters ringed him in, an impenetrable barrier. It cut him off irrevocably from his old familiar world. To the eyes of this isolated watcher it symbolised nothing but the yawning chasms of separation. Never at peace, dark, mysterious, homeless, wandering, it was so like the restless yearning heart of humanity. His mood, however, is not constant. He looks upon the sea with varying emotions. At one time in his dreams it still remains before the throne of God, that loathed waste of waters, but it has become clear as crystal, its enigmas at last unravelled in the light of God's revelation of His ways. At another, and perhaps in an hour of more acute loneliness and depression, when he pictures the new heaven and the new earth, in his vision there can be no more sea.

III

Let us then first consider his dream that before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal. This is a piece of imagination both beautiful and strongly suggestive. The sea is still there among the ultimate things, but it is calm and transparent and clear as crystal. There is no dread or terror in it now, for the mystery of it is dispelled. The veil is lifted from off the face of all things, and God's whole purpose is at last

revealed. It is grey no longer, that strange cold sea that ravages and divides our human life. You can see through it to its very depths and understand all that it has concealed.

I think the man from Patmos must already have awakened a response in some hearts here to-night. There may be, and doubtless are, some among us burdened with a sorrow, a disappointment, or a loss. Well, this writer of antiquity has a message for them. Can they not bring themselves to look upon their secret pain in the light of that crystal sea—in other words, as God looks upon it? Can those who long for the sound of a voice that is still, or whose hearts are aching because of loved ones who have passed on into that silence which surrounds our throbbing little lives, or who have failed in some cherished enterprise, or who have been beaten or disappointed or thwarted in their hopes, or who have become disillusioned, not having found in life what they once expected to find—can such not see, and seeing take fresh courage, the vision of that crystal sea before the throne “where the obstinate questionings of the mind will be answered and the heart find rest”? There, mysteries are mysteries no longer. The dark ocean of human experience has become clear as crystal in God’s presence. There is neither a shadow nor a ripple to mar its calm transparency. Surely, surely, it must be so at last!

Indeed there are moments, and we all have experienced them, when the staggering problems of existence rise up before us and seem to quench the flame of faith. The mind falters before such things as the prosperity of unrighteousness and the many adversities which so often are endured by the children of light. Mere logic finds it difficult to grapple with that rain from heaven which falls on the just and the unjust alike. The burdens and afflictions which so many innocent and gracious spirits are forced to carry seem rather the decree of a savage Evil than of the God and Father of our Lord

Jesus Christ. Religion sometimes seems so vague, the Saviour and His cross so remote, and the eternal world so unreal compared to the things that are seen and temporal. What is God doing with the works of His hands? That cry is often forced from the breaking heart.

There is the mystery of evil. We need not think we can explain it, for neither the formulæ of theologians nor the theories of the philosophic schools afford adequate or satisfactory explanation which man can wholly fit in with his own faith and experience. Back in the mists of antiquity some unknown writer penned the beautiful idyll of the Garden of Eden in order to demonstrate the facts of sin, temptation, and the redemptive power of God. He devised the mystical symbols of a man, a woman, a serpent, and a tree of knowledge, gave us the story of the Fall of Man, and left us to build up a theology on the basis of this allegory. And though you may say that the theory of evolution is biologically and historically more accurate, and that the Ascent of Man is more true than the Fall of Man, neither the one nor the other is fully explanatory of the existence of evil in a universe whose fundamental principle, so Christianity believes, is the law of divine wisdom, goodness, and love. Did God create evil, or if omnipotent why does He tolerate it? The mystery of evil with all its attendant havoc in the lives of men baffles us and defies our speculation. Here we are, like the man on Patmos, encircled by a silent sea of mystery. Evil exists; yet in our hearts and by our experience we believe and know that God is good.

There is also the problem of pain. In this neither the acquiescent pessimism of Job, nor the assurance of Mrs. Eddy, affords us an explanation. There are those who attempt to explain the mystery of physical suffering by arguing that pain is the alarm bell of the body. Others tell us that it is a schoolmaster whose function is to teach, subdue, and humble an arrogant race, and

that indeed in most cases man is himself the author and creator of his own pain. But this theory collapses when you enter the wards of a children's hospital and witness what is being endured by little ones who have known no sin and who neither intellectually, morally, nor spiritually are ready for reaction to the discipline and instruction of suffering. There is also a school of thought which informs us that sickness and disease are indications that we have drifted away from God, and that the fullness of His life is not being allowed freely to operate in our own ; which seems strange, to say the least of it, when you see pure, unselfish, saintly people tortured with lingering agony, and selfish, arrogant, godless people flourishing in robust and abundant health. Pain also is in the sea of mystery that hems us in. Suffering exists and falls on the good and the evil ; yet we believe and know that God is good.

And death ! How men have longed that someone would come back from that shadowy bourne and deliver up its secret ! We have all heard of friends who have made a compact that whichever died first would, if it were possible, return to communicate with the one who was left behind. Perhaps some do. Trustworthy and truthful people assure us from time to time that they have seen their dead alive and radiant with immortality. Personally, I think it is quite possible that there are people so spiritually sensitised as to be capable of receiving such a revelation ; and many incidents of which I know can hardly be dismissed with sceptical contempt. But at the same time the insuperable difficulty of absolutely determining in the case of one individual between objective and subjective experience prevents us from accepting such things as wholly authentic and reliable. Death remains to us the final mystery, yet in our hearts we know and believe that it has been swallowed up in victory.

This indeed is a world of wearying contradictions and baffling enigmas. But we must believe, we are com-

pelled to believe, that it is a just and righteous world. Life itself becomes a thing of horror, a hideous and devilish masquerade, a thing unendurable and intolerable to rational beings, unless we postulate that behind its strange fantastic staging of triumph and catastrophe there does await us an ultimate explanation which is reliable and sure. It is my faith that there will be none of us, however hard our path has been, who at the last before the Father's face will not with gratitude confess, as we look back upon our ways with "larger, other eyes," that all God's doings with us have been wise and good.

And there are moments of strangely vivid certainty when as afar off we seem to catch the gleam of that crystal sea before His throne, and with a faith deeper than all finite knowledge we know that, in spite of all that seems to be, the things of this world are working for each brave and faithful spirit an eternal weight of glory, that the purposes of God are good, and all is well and will be well, and that those who endure unto the end will somewhere and some day find it to be true.

IV

But later on the writer of the Book of the Revelation will have no sea at all. "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth : for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away ; and there was no more sea." This also is wonderful imagery, and I think that, beautiful as is the symbolism of the sea of crystal before the throne, most of us in our final preference would with the seer of Patmos wipe the sea away.

The analogy which to this man's mind appeared between the waters of the Aegean and mortal experience is not far-fetched. Dr. George Matheson, in one of his suggestive meditations, has observed that human life has more sea than land : that it is not a connected continent—a brotherhood of souls—but a multitude of little islands divided by stormy waves. There is a great

truth in such a statement. And indeed our own personalities rarely achieve an ordered harmony. The discords of division and separation invade them. We stress so much that is unimportant and frequently lay but little emphasis on much that matters everything. Manufacturing mountains out of molehills is an activity characteristic of most of us, and at times we seem quite incapable of appreciating true values from false or making any distinction between gold and tinsel. We exaggerate and depreciate, and do both with quite inadequate reasons. We are critical and captious without justification or cause. We hug to our bosoms our bigotries and indiscriminate prejudices, and delude ourselves into believing that we are people of strong convictions. We are continually embroiled in the struggle between our duties and our desires.

Nor is our life in its social aspect a community of brethren bound together by the ties of mutual interests and common purposes. It is composed of innumerable islands flung up by the volcanic forces of greed and selfishness and severed by wild and tempestuous waves. The voices of our brethren, when they hail us, are drowned by the violence of the seas. Man indeed is very lonely. He knows little or nothing about his neighbour, and therefore generally suspects those whom in truth he really ought to love. Not one of us can enter wholly into the thoughts even of those who are nearest and dearest to us. All alone we each of us live, and all alone we die.

But the man on Patmos, who knew what human loneliness could be, dreamed a dream of a grander future. He saw the separating waters assuaged. Above the sinking floods the unity of the earth appeared. Man drew near to man, and each with a wondering gladness recognised in the other not a potential enemy but a brother and a friend. The misunderstandings were removed, the old suspicions and enmities were stilled. The mountain of the Lord was established above the

hills, and classes and nations, relieved from the stultifying limitations of their selfish insularity, flowed together unto it, for there was no more sea. "Come ye, for where were the waters is now a highway for our feet. Come ye, and let us go up unto the mountain of the Lord, and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths."

V

Do you complain that this is simply idealism run riot? Well, it is the idealism of Jesus Christ, and He maintained it to be practical. His faith in the possibilities of human nature knew no limits. He recognised, for He understood our nature, the inherent heroism in men and women, even in the worst of them, and He knew that the way to win the allegiance of man is to call him to a great adventure and to show him that you believe him capable of winning through.

Christ consistently maintained that the Kingdom of God was attainable, and that at the Judgment Seat each one of us at last must give an account of the measure of our individual effort towards its realisation. He proclaimed to a world which knew as little of the meaning of human brotherhood as it knew of the Fatherhood of God that humanity was a family, united in one hope, one faith, and the pursuit of one objective, beneath the revealed will and purpose of a Creator who loves each soul that He has made.

If then we accept His position, certain results ought to follow in our social experience. Man is bound to respect his neighbour's rights, and selfish invasion of these in any form—from the glittering deceptions of dishonest finance on a gigantic scale to the mere sordid burgling of a man's house, from ambitious but unrighteous policies of national aggrandisement to the stealing of a purse, from exploiting labour and denying to a man a just profit from his work to a man idling at his work and defrauding his employer, from murder to

the attempted murder of a man's reputation or character or the estimation in which he is held by others, by mean suggestion, scandal, spite, and uncharitableness—belongs all to one category, and is deliberate sin against humanity and therefore against that God who made man for Himself.

And further, Christ insisted that personality was sacred, and that therefore to violate that sanctity by impurity or fleshly excess, to soil it or defile it in one's own or in another's soul or body, or indeed even to injure it by wantonly disregarding another's needs, is sin against humanity and therefore against God. Man, He declared, must help to bear his brother's burden and strive in love to be his brother's keeper. On all this Christ was adamant. So that he who has two coats and sees his brother naked, yet helps him not ; he who feasts in affluence, yet is careless of his impoverished brother's necessity ; he who rejoices, yet recks not of his brother's sorrow—he sins against humanity and therefore against God.

When we look around us and see "man's inhumanity to man," and the catastrophe and suffering that are the fruits of selfishness and passion and utter lack of principle ; when we see class antagonisms and racial hatred shouting unashamed ; when we see pledges publicly given and scornfully broken, a people's trust invited and shamefully betrayed, the sanctity of the plighted word scoffed at and the moral obligations of personal and public honour treated as a futile idealism—we are forced to recognise that the angry sea that breaks up the unity of men is still, after twenty centuries, very much in evidence.

But across the years rings out the confident cry from Patmos, "There shall be no more sea." "There must always be," we answer back, in our dismay. But are we not a little hasty in this rejoinder ? When we weakly accept the imperfections of society as permanent and ineradicable evils on the ground that we "can't change human nature," can we square this lack of faith in the future of humanity with a belief that the universe

in which we live is not the product of blind chance, but is the expression of a divine purpose conceived in a creative Mind? If there be a world-process it must have a meaning, and if the attributes of the Creator are moral His ultimate purpose must be good.

Moreover, in the character of Christ, and in the example of every faithful and unselfish spirit, we have evidence enough of the inward beauty to which the individual can rise. What others have shown to be possible cannot be rejected by us as beyond our powers. That which has been done can be done again, and the heights of moral and spiritual loveliness which men and women have scaled we dare not classify as unattainable by ourselves. The little drops of water make the mighty ocean, and the drying up of that poisonous drop of separatism, selfish isolation, and unchristian tendency in one single heart does decrease, fractionally but actually, the dreary wastes of troubled waters which mock the brotherhood of man, and does bring nearer a day when there shall be no more sea.

VI

Baron von Hügel tells us that the Christian faith is a contagious thing. It is more caught than acquired. Men catch it from other people, and so from torch to torch the light is passed on. It is worth thinking over whether our own faith is such as is likely to be virulently infectious. To pass on the faith that you yourself have found by the shining power of a life which reveals the moral and spiritual beauty of Christ and quietly converts others by the appeal of its own loveliness, is a contribution to the unity of the world that is not beyond even our power to make. Such a life will not be mere passive contemplation, though it will find its inspiration in communion with God. It will be energetically active, since we cannot dissociate ourselves from those people among whom God has seen fit to place us.

Let us be practical and begin but not end in revising our whole attitude to those who compose our own intimate circle. Christianity begins at home, and no attempts to put it into practice outside can give people the right to call themselves disciples of Jesus who at their own firesides and amid the circle of their personal friends are being selfish and self-centred and causing strife and dispeace. The Christian will also evidence this spirit in the wider affairs of corporate life. He will in the first place seek the peace of the Church of God. He will not be found among those conducting polemics or public diatribes against other denominations, for while loyal to his own principles he will remember that truth is manifold and that other people who seek God by different ways and through other forms of worship may and do love Him equally well. And in his own denomination, and his own congregation, he will not stir up trouble over non-essentials and will always honestly try to distinguish between principle and prejudice. He will in business be honest and fair, just and upright, remembering his duty to those who serve him and whom he serves, and that no Christian dare exploit or deceive those for whom his Saviour died.

He will remember too that the problem of peace—peace among the nations and peace among all classes and conditions of men—is the critical problem with which the statesmanship of the modern world is faced and upon the solution of which the future of the world depends. Thus he will hesitate to support aught that is calculated to embitter public opinion, benefit one section of the community at the expense of another, foster antagonisms, inflame passion and prejudice, or accentuate those divisions which separate men from each other. At home and abroad the Christian will consistently try to evidence the mind that was in Christ, chivalrous and fair, unselfish and considerate, broad but just, righteous but merciful.

Those who strive to follow in the way the Saviour trod

discover early that that way is not easy. It is not easy to discipline the mind to high ideals, to acquire that faith which knows the world is well lost for the sake of them, to order and control desires, to relinquish personal preferences for the sake of others' good. Sir Walter Scott reminded us that unselfishness of conduct and rectitude of principle are not naturally allied with, nor adequately rewarded by, the gratification of our egotistical wishes or personal desires. But, as he went on to say, although a glance at the great picture of life will show that they seldom are thus remunerated, yet for those who practise them the internal consciousness of their high-minded discharge of duty and of self-denial produces on their own reflections a more adequate recompense in the form of that peace which the world can neither give nor take away.

The Kingdom of God is within us. And in all our troubles and distresses the gate of salvation lies in the individual life. For though the world be composed of nations, and nations of classes, these in turn are composed of persons whose character determines the character of the group. Only a world populated by Christians can be Christian in its collective outlook and practice, and the first duty of each of us is to put our own house in order. Those whose lives are honestly directed towards swelling such a population never, amid whatever change, disaster, or disappointment, lose their faith in human nature. For their hearts and minds are harmonised with the spirit of Him who even in the agony of His crucifixion was sustained by confidence in the ultimate triumph of His cause.

VII

There is, lastly, another type of separation whose shadow lies heavy on human hearts. It is not a wilful and deliberate separation of ourselves from others, but one which comes irrespective of our personal volition.

We have all experienced its poignancy and sadness. Friend has said good-bye to friend, lover to lover, parent to child. Ties have been snapped, roots torn up, domestic circles broken. Farewell has been said to aspirations, hopes, and dreams. And always, lurking somewhere even in our lightest moments, is the consciousness, to which I referred earlier, of that final parting awaiting us all when the soul must quit its familiar tabernacle.

The transitoriness of human affairs, whether or not we talk of it much, is a matter of profound and constant contemplation even with very ordinary people. This is well proven by the fact that it is the central theme of art and literature. The artist, whether he work on canvas, paper, glass, or stone, never strays far from essential reality. This consciousness of the inevitability of change, this gnawing sense that there is no voice which will not one day be stilled and no music which will not fade into silence at length, was much in the thoughts of the man who on Patmos wrote the Book of the Revelation. So that he longed with all the intensity of his soul not only for an earth, but for a heaven, where at length there would be permanence and security, and the separating sea with the former things should have passed away.

It is a thought which alone finds healing and consolation in that faith which unites both seen and unseen, time and eternity, in Jesus Christ, in whom the divine and human meet, and who Himself remains the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. Through Him we can "greet the unseen with a cheer," facing with confidence and trust the future and all that it may bring and all that it may take from us, since in Him we have assurance that though the things which are seen are temporal, the things which are not seen are eternal.

VIII

Preaching Him and the truth of His resurrection, in the light of whose abiding significance the shadows of our changing days are dispelled, I came among you eight years ago. Preaching Christ and His resurrection with even more assured conviction, this night I take leave of you. In any congregation the passing of eight years works great changes. With many of you I have been privileged to share intimately in joy and sorrow, laughter and tears, defeats and triumphs, and sacred ties have been forged between us which are not easily severed.

For abundant evidence of genuine friendship, for much, for very much, kindness and consideration, I gratefully thank you. And there is also another side of which I am painfully conscious, therefore for many imperfections on my part I ask your forgiveness. No one to-day is more aware than I how much has been left undone by me which might and which ought to have been done. Well, the stock-taking of my ministry here must be my own personal affair. It lies between myself and Him who sent me to be His servant in your midst, and you may trust me that I will not fail to make it. I would only hope that I may have succeeded in helping some of you a little, that I may have brought some comfort and encouragement when you stood in need of it, established you somewhat more firmly in your religious faith, and given you some glimpse of the vision glorious which is apprehended by a life of love and service, and of the life eternal which is God's gift to men in Jesus Christ our Lord. I would like to think that when I have left you, you will continue to seek that truth to which, however inadequately, I have tried to lead you.

And now, I bid you farewell, believing that what we all of us have won in things that are true and kind and gracious will not and cannot be lost to us, but that our

human friendships and affections, when time and change and death have done their worst, are safe with Christ for evermore. Your prayers, I know, will follow me as I go to take up a task whose great responsibilities and exacting duties are sufficient to cause trepidation to any man, and especially to one of my limited experience. The call to the pulpit of St. Giles', coming as it did so unexpectedly, I did not accept without serious consideration and very deep anxiety. But I have put my hand to the plough, and I trust you will not forget me as I strive to drive the furrow straight to its end.

And, as we part, I can assure you that often my thoughts will be with you in this place of peaceful memory. Indeed, I was privileged to begin my ministry here, and few men are fortunate enough to commence their life's work within sight of their childhood's home. And though I go to our great national temple, it is near you here, across those waters and among the woodlands and hills of the Gareloch by whose shores of beauty I was born and where my holiest remembrance dwells, that will always be the land of my love and the land of my dreams. "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning."

AN EASTER SERMON

*Preached in St. Giles' Cathedral, Easter Evening,
4th April 1926*¹

We trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel.—*St. Luke xxiv. 21.*

He goeth before you into Galilee.—*St. Mark xvi. 7.*

I

“HE is not here ; for He is risen !” That is the shout of triumphant challenge with which the Universal Church to-day flings down the gauntlet before the powers of darkness, sin, and death. It is inscribed in letters of blazing light on the banners of the crusading hosts who against the world, the flesh, and the devil are pushing forward the frontiers of the Kingdom of God. That Jesus Christ was seen alive subsequent to His physical death upon the Cross, that He lives as the Lord on whose head are many crowns, and that through His gospel and His resurrection life and immortality have been brought to light—that is the thrilling message of Easter Day !

In the surgent flood of passionate adoration which at Easter beats up through the swelling heart of Christendom we have evidence enough that the love which our Lord inspired in His disciples has not been quenched by the bitter waters of His suffering and crucifixion, but that it enthalls the very soul of the world and enriches the life of man with a faith in an eternal destiny which neither the mysteries of time and place nor the cold shadow of the grave can enfeeble or destroy. The fact

¹ Part of this sermon was broadcast from the Edinburgh Studio to the British Isles on the evening of Sunday, 18th April 1926.

of the Resurrection has revolutionised the life of mankind. It is the most tremendous fact of history. By it, and by it alone, Christendom came into being, and on it Christendom stands. The Church's one foundation is the Lord who was not holden of death.

Christianity first and foremost is not a speculative system nor a philosophical theory. It is a religion centred in a historic Personality and based upon an asserted fact round which its faith and life revolve—namely, that at a specific point in time, on the third day after His bodily death, Jesus Christ came back alive to His disciples. They saw Him, consorted with Him, spoke to Him. It was not in the negative form of being which was all that contemporary thought, either Hebrew or Gentile, could even at its best portray as the life of an incorporeal spirit, that they recognised Him. Nor was His appearance some subtle subjective conception. These men declared that their Friend came back to them in everything that we know as constituting human personality. "Behold," He said, "it is I myself."

There are some who as they approach the resurrection narratives feel themselves beset by scepticism and encompassed with many difficulties ; but even they are compelled to reverence before the passionate insistence of the disciples that Christ Himself, vivid and recognisable, returned amongst them from the grave, and moved them, incredulous as at first they were, eventually to cry in wonder and amazement, "It is the Lord ; and death has had no dominion over Him." It was not because of a sense of loyalty to a dead friend, whom they had largely misunderstood but now more adequately appreciated, that these men suddenly applied themselves to the superhuman task of world evangelisation in His name. Men do not thus attempt to expiate their imperfect appreciation of the gift of human friendship. It was because, and only because, they were convinced that Christ was not dead but living

that they did so. They set out not to preach a code of ethics derived from His teaching and example, but to preach a gospel of salvation centred in His cross and resurrection. And it was because, and only because, they preached the Resurrection that the Church was born. The Church lives simply because Christ lives. This is a rational universe where results have causes, and the fact of Christendom and the persistence of the Catholic Church require for their explanation nothing less than that event which Christianity maintains took place at Jerusalem on the third day after the death of Jesus. Unless He actually did appear as the risen Lord subsequent to His crucifixion and burial, we cannot, so far as I can see, put forward any reasonable interpretation at all of the history of the Church and the Christian religion.

“Only very imperfectly,” says Dr. Herbert Workman, “do we yet understand the process by which a young, proscribed creed, transplanted from the land of its birth to the abodes of men of alien thought and of alien institutions, in the teeth of relentless edicts, without as yet settled doctrines, a settled canon—apart from the Old Testament—or settled organisation, became a homogeneous force which the Roman Empire could not overthrow, and with which the culture of the world was bound to come to terms.” But we do know at least, whatever else may be obscure, that its life and energy were derived solely from the blazing conviction that Jesus Christ was alive, and lived in His people and they in Him, and that through Him and from Him theirs was the power of the Holy Ghost. It is difficult to see how without this conviction Christianity could have spread much beyond the walls of Jerusalem. When, shortly after the crucifixion of Jesus, Gamaliel was made aware of local disturbances which were here and there arising owing to the fanaticism of certain obscure persons who were propagating a story, on the face of it absurd, that a certain Jew who had been

executed had risen from the dead, he disposed of the matter with a very shrewd instinct for human nature. "If this thing be of men," said he, "it will come to naught," and was content to leave it at that.

It has not come to naught, however, and again to-day we have gathered round that empty tomb. Two thousand years have passed away, and here in this island situated in the westernmost limit of that continent beyond whose easternmost frontiers He was born we cry to-night with exultation that Jesus of Nazareth has overcome the sharpness of death and opened up the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers. It is a strange and throbbing hour, and it is a poor heart that can remain undisturbed by a profound emotion. The fragrance of the Easter lilies fills the universe of God, and everywhere falls the golden glow of resurrection light. From the garden of Joseph of Arimathæa in far-off Palestine comes the call of the angels stirring the dawn-mists to music—"He is not here: He is risen, as He said. He goeth before you into Galilee."

II

It is thus with a thrilling sense of awe, with a conviction that, whether we can understand them or not, we nevertheless are dealing with actual facts, with an episode that did in reality occur, that we follow two of the disciples on that first Easter evening, as, heavy-spirited and broken-hearted, they wearily toiled out the white dusty road from Jerusalem to Emmaus. They walked as men walk when oppressed by catastrophe and crushing loss—haltingly, slowly. As they journeyed they talked over it all—the hope that was dead, the vision that had faded, the tragedy which had closed the brief earthly life of that radiant-spirited young enthusiast who, they had hoped, would have redeemed Israel. When on their way a Stranger joined them and sympathetically remarked on their forlorn dejection,

the fountain of their feelings was unsealed. They opened their hearts to Him with spasmodic bursts of choking emotion, for somehow He seemed to understand. He was dead, they told Him brokenly, martyred, crucified, the Friend they had followed, and loved, and cherished. Such a future they had once pictured for Him! Such dreams He had inspired in them! He had promised to go before them into Galilee. They trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel. And that was the end of the business—that hideous sight they had witnessed two days ago—the naked cross on Calvary's hill, and His battered murdered body!

Some of the women had been saying something about His having risen again. It was but women's excitement, probably—an hysteria, nerves, a wild imagination. They did not know. Anyhow, he was dead; and that was all there was to it. Men did not come back from the grave. And with a curiously understanding heart this Stranger seemed to know just how to comfort them, these sad, disillusioned men; and in His presence they were filled with a strange peace, they did not quite know why. So much so, that when they reached Emmaus and He would have left them, they constrained Him, saying: "Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent."

It was at supper that the incredible thing happened. Was it His act of taking bread, blessing it, and breaking it, queerly reminiscent of a scene very similar to this, only a few nights previously, in an upper room in Jerusalem, that suddenly awakened their numbed and frozen minds to startled recognition? Was it a light on His uplifted face that all at once wrenched open the floodgates of memory and made His two companions spring in shaken excitement from the table—only to behold Him vanish from their sight? . . . Had they said that men did not come back from the grave? God of their fathers! Jesus *had* come back. . . . *It was He!*

It is one of the jewels of the Gospel, this story, and

I do not envy the man who can read it unmoved. It is the epitome of human life. It strikes home to the heart of reality. I have walked that road to Emmaus, and so have most of you who are listening to me to-night. For the road to Emmaus is the road of broken hopes and lost ideals. There come moments in every life when the fading of a bright star leaves the heavens black and the world all cold in a shivering gloom. There is no soul which has not fought against the bitter legacy of pessimistic cynicism bequeathed in the death of a great and cherished hope. There is none who has not gazed with sad eyes out into an intolerably emptied universe after a vanishing dream—"Gone, flitted away, taking the stars from the night and the sun from the day; gone—and a cloud in the heart, and a storm in the air." Surely as we look back on the varied scenes of our own chequered lives we have a fellow-feeling, profound and sincere, for those two men on that Syrian road, dazed and bewildered by the collapse of everything on which they had staked their very souls. We know, or we ought to know, the perils of that darkened highway, where love, and trust, and faith in God and man have been lost to many a traveller too tired with fighting against adversities to struggle any more.

The road of human disillusionment is one which none of us dares walk alone. It is sheer nonsense to say that sorrow and disaster and those tribulations to which all flesh is heir inevitably ennoble and rarefy the spirit. Often indeed they do. But often, too, snapping the chains of faith, they hurl the soul into the darkness of unrelieved despair. Unless with a dogged intensity of will no less than with a passionate earnestness of heart we hold unswervingly to certain vital principles, such as the inherent goodness of the universe; unless we are prepared to discount all appearances and to believe that the Spirit of the great world is just, that life is a purposeful process working out to a divine destiny beneath the hand of a wise and righteous God, that even in the cross

of His martyred Son His love is somehow revealed, why should we submit in trust and resignation to the bludgeonings of sportive chance and ironic fate? Why should we fight to hold our heads erect, "bloody, but unbowed," unless in the face of all that seems to deny His wisdom and His pity we cling to the faith that we are made for God alone?

III

Who of us could face alone that journey to Emmaus? It is when Jesus meets the tired pilgrims and travels by their side that the scales drop from the blinded eyes, and dead enthusiasms are revived, and buried hopes and dreams rise to new life again. Only if Jesus Christ spoke true, have we any real incentive towards pure courageous living—only if His values are the eternal values. These two men who met Him on their weary way that evening knew this all too well. It was the Man they met upon the road who brought them peace, who made them strong again, who quieted the fears of their troubled emptied hearts. They knew that should He ever leave them, these things at once would leave them too. So that, when they reached Emmaus, they besought Him not to depart from them and leave them to themselves. So always in the twilight of his human fears, man turns his face to the divine and cries: "Abide with me! For the shadows are deep, and it is towards evening, O Lord."

Has your own individual experience not verified this? Has Jesus Christ never met you by the way in times of disappointment, failure, loss, and sorrow? When you were tired, and dispirited, and ready to give up the wearisome fight for your ideals, has He not come to you bringing courage and speaking peace? I do not thus speak mechanically, God knows, or with a careless use of pious platitudes. I speak thus to you because I know that it is true that Christ can come in the bitterest pang

of human pain, in the darkness of despair, and in the shadowed hour when a great hope lies dead. Men and women I have known, mysteriously burdened in God's strange providence with burdens which seemed too heavy for mortals to bear, by His inspiration have bravely shouldered yet others when it seemed impossible that they could have strength or endurance left to carry any more. And I have heard those whose eyes were on the river of death telling me that they feared no evil, since they saw Him, their Friend, moving out yonder on that darkened water.

Life for many people proves a grim affair. For all of us it is often difficult and always uncertain. Most people have some secret anxiety concerned perhaps with themselves or perhaps with others dearer to them than their own life. Some of us this evening have doubtless brought many cares to the House of God, some their griefs, and others sordid memories which trouble and depress them. It is not always easy to adjust ourselves to the new revelation of things and values in the light of Easter. When the lamp of hope has burned low, and flowers have withered and dreams are dead, when cold ashes are all that remain of what once were ambition's blazing fires, when the hand we have clasped and the face we have loved are covered by the dust, it is difficult to recognise who it is that walks with us the road to Emmaus. Rather, crying for the restoration of the vanished years, do we fail to pay attention to Him but struggle and beat our hands against our earthly lot. The flashing of the resurrection glory sometimes dazes us rather than bestows the calm light of revelation as we gaze into the depths of human sorrow, pain, defeat, and sin. Life appears as but a flying scroll, scribbled all over with mystery on mystery.

It is good for us to look back to-night to His empty grave. There are few here who have not a little mound in some God's Acre which is very holy ground. You sometimes visit it and reverently place a flower upon

the grave that holds so much that was precious in your past. It does no good to the dear dust that rests below. No, but it does you good. You go away a better father, a more tender husband, a more loving wife or mother, a more true and loyal friend. And so it is as we stand by the empty grave of Jesus. He is not here. He is risen!—but it surely helps us, as we stare into its emptied gloom that could not hold the rising God, to remember the shame of men which He endured, their sins which laid Him there, and the death which He died that they might live. Yes, and as we hear the angels' voices, does not a gleam of glory fall across the graves where our own loved ones sleep?

For what is the glad assurance of this Easter Day? Is it not that by every grave there stands the shining figure of the victorious Christ with the words of immortality on His blessed lips, "Because I live, ye shall live also"? Is it not that by every human wreck and failure stands the living Friend of man, bidding them rise and fight again since there is no wrong that He cannot most certainly make right? Is it not that in every human grief the Man of Sorrows is touching with the soft radiance of His peace each darkened Galilee that our feet have trod? We are often so absorbed in concentration on the shadows of the highway to Emmaus and the difficult roads that lead to Galilee that we fail to realise that One treads them beside us. And when He whom the grave could not bind or keep comes back to us triumphant, we mistake Him for a stranger. But still He comes—in the tear of penitence, in every lofty aspiration, in each pure ideal, in each effort towards courage, faith, and love, and a more true nobility of living.

IV

And all this is true in our corporate no less than in our individual experience. The feet of humanity these days are on the road to Emmaus. It is thronged with

travellers. This is not an age of thoroughgoing religious indifference, for men are out on the moors and fens of the world desperately seeking for the way that leadeth unto life. Our post-war years, however, have killed for many the idealism of sacrifice and service, of living and dying for a high cause and a splendid hope, to which the European War gave birth in them. In the cruel disillusionment of unfulfilled hopes and promises, of class antagonisms, of greed and selfishness, and unprincipled conduct practised everywhere, the dream of a better world has faded. Some have quite lost heart and have ceased to believe that the principle of the universe is the principle of love. With the disciples on the road to Emmaus they cry: "We trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel; but now He is dead."

My friends, the Christ is not dead. Still among the seething tumults of mankind He walks with healing in His seamless dress. Still from His pierced side there flows the stream in which the world can cleanse its soul. Still human sin and selfishness fear Him, and know Him to be not a dead issue but a living power which has got to be reckoned with. I believe in the redeeming power of Jesus Christ. I have too often seen it make saints and heroes from the very dregs of humanity to doubt its terrific reality. And what He can do with individuals, He can do for collective mankind. Now, when the world is sick unto death, when our civilisation is at its cross-roads, when in our land we are faced with possible crisis in the next few weeks, there is a call to each one of us to refuse to give way to supine despondency, to lift our heads in courage and in dignity, to nerve ourselves for our part in the sacrifice and ministry of Christian service which demands that men shall give as well as take.

Will He not bless the future, who has blessed the past? Need we fear life's unknown Galilees when He goes on before us? Is not the message of the angels by His

empty tomb, immortal music in the ears of men—"He is not here : He is risen !" —is not that the surety and the pledge that if the sun goes down, the dawn will come again ? "If winter comes, can spring be far behind ?" It is not every calamity that is a curse, and adversity, if viewed in the light of Him who walked with His disciples on the road to Emmaus, is a sister of blessing. Our way may be leading us, individually and as a people, through many anxieties and many troubles, but it may be that in the very problems of our harassed times lies the way to a clearer realisation of Christian theory and duty, that in themselves they are weaving on the loom of our dilemmas a faith in which a new generation will win to a loftier religious experience, to a deeper charity, a wider brotherhood, and a nobler trust in God and man than we have ever known. We can but hope that this is so, and do our best to make it so. There are, at any rate, growing up among us a young generation who are the hope of the future, and who will be largely what the influence and example of their elders make them. That is a fact grave enough.

"If only things were more clear," we are so inclined to grumble. "If only life and its issues were more definite, instead of all this hunting about in the mists, this groping, vagueness, uncertainty, indecision." Well, the reason why the attitude of our minds to life is so often negative, is just that we are not sure in what, or in whom, lies anything positive at all. And while we hesitate the living Christ waits near—but only as a stranger, unrecognised, unknown. Yet His message, if we listen, is not obscure. For each of us a work to do—a work which, however humble, requires as much faith, and charity, and courage as we are likely, even the best of us, to be able to bring into play. At Emmaus they recognised Him in the breaking of bread. "It is a pity," once wrote David Livingstone, "some people cannot see that the true and honest discharge of the common duties of everyday life is divine

service.” Perhaps we fail, many of us, to recognise that the service of Christ and the service of man begin in things which we despise as too familiar, too petty, to form the bulwarks of the Kingdom of God—the simple round of common life, our daily duty, our homes, our friends, the daily opportunity of playing straight, and shewing mercy, and simply trying to be kind.

“A gentleman,” it has been said, “is a man who will not set his rights against other people’s feelings, or his feelings against other people’s rights.” The issues of our troubled days would for all of us become clearer if we realised that life, and all life, is summarised in the simple biography of the Son of Mary: “Jesus of Nazareth went about doing good.” For those who strive to practise that simple creed—simple, but difficult enough for most of us—the road to Emmaus, though strewn with its withered blossoms, becomes transfigured with a rainbowed light. No more from doubting lips can ascend the cry, “We trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel,” for those who live in His spirit know that Israel shall be redeemed. Life, God knows, will still remain a mystery, but at any rate you will find in it a practical sphere where each can serve, and each can love, and every sorrow can be lightened by sharing a brother’s cross. Death and the grave will still remain as a mystery, but no more as a terror, since he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever. Time and change will still be wrapped in mystery, but a mystery through which the dayspring from on high visits us, since we know that our souls, if committed to His keeping, are removed for ever from the touch of mortal decay; and that each word, each deed, each thought, which is touched by His gracious compassionate spirit, is weaving for us a garment of immortality like unto that which clothes that blessed throng, who having come through tribulation have washed their robes and made them white, and see Him as He is.

V

Then lift your eyes above the dusty road of life this happy day, ye who are troubled by the past or fearful for the future. Lo ! there He waits beside you, your dear and loving Lord, ready to go with you to the Emmaus of your broken hopes, and to the Galilee of your pain and fears and toil, the burden-bearer, the sorrow-sharer, the way, the truth, the life eternal. Much in this world is uncertain, but it is inevitable that each one of us must some day face the road of disillusionment that leads to Emmaus and the highway to the Galilee of bitter experience. Life cannot be all sunshine for any of us, and in one of its Galilees we must sooner or later find ourselves—of affliction, perhaps, of sickness, or of sorrow, and certainly at last the Galilee of death. In the company of the living Christ we will surely find the shrouding mysteries of these shadowed lands dispelled. Many pilgrims are out this night amid these lonely desert places with heavy hearts and eyes that are too sad to weep. For a world which is continually echoing to the sob of farewells, where always there are open graves, where dreams for the most part can but remain as dreams, where hopes are brought to birth only to be blighted, where the armies of temptation lie ambushed at every turn, who can bring trust and strength and confidence but the risen Son of God ? How can man face Galilee save in the faith that his Saviour is alive and goes before him, whose love is changeless and whose power is not shortened, and who is able to save no less than in those days when healing was even in the touch of His seamless dress ?

If it be not true that He is alive for evermore and goes before us into Galilee, the sun of life is fallen from its heavens. If it be not true, then my preaching to you to-night is the most tragic of mockeries. If it be not

true, then the sublime historic faith that builded this great Cathedral is and has been a hideous lie, two thousand years of certainty and love and adoring worship have poured forth their spiritual treasure into nothingness, and at the heart of all things there can be neither justice, truth, nor reason. If it be not true, then our having gathered this morning around the Holy Table was the vainest of vain delusions, and the sacramental cup and bread were but the dreary and hopeless symbols of a hollow sham. Yes, as has been said, if from the tomb in the garden of Joseph of Arimathæa no living Christ ever issued, that tomb becomes not merely the grave of a beaten visionary, it becomes the grave of a religion with all the splendid devotion and enthusiasms it has inspired.

If Jesus died,
Nought but the winter and the gloom remain.
But Jesus lives !
Then full and fain,
Laugh and sing, ye golden flowers,
Drifting clouds and dancing showers,
Silver moons that wax and wane,
Christ is risen ! Christ is risen !
God's green spring is true again.

He lives ! and the aching heart knows its sorrow blessed and sanctified. He lives ! and the weak are strong, the cowards brave, and the beaten rise to fight again. He lives ! and the weary find their peace, the lonely a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother, and the darkest and most blackened life a love that wipes its sin away. He lives ! and at the Holy Table, God's blessed trysting-place with man, we met this morning not merely to commemorate a heroic leader who nobly died, but joyfully amid the Easter hallelujahs to greet Him by whom the dominion of death was vanquished, and who in the Sacrament comes back amid the cohorts of the blessed dead to feed His people with

Himself ; yea, who, in giving us Himself, gives us all things in that

 holy bread
By which the soul of man is fed :
The holy bread, the food unpriced,
Thy everlasting mercy, Christ !

SERMON AT THE UNITED SERVICE OF THANKS-
GIVING AND INTERCESSION AT THE CON-
CLUSION OF THE GENERAL STRIKE

*Preached in St. Giles' Cathedral on the Evening of the
Sunday after Ascension, 16th May 1926*

And immediately I was in the spirit : and, behold, a throne was
set in heaven, and one sat on the throne.—*Revelation* iv. 2.

I

ASCENSIONTIDE is Christendom's declaration of its faith in the sovereignty of Jesus Christ, a faith which the writer of the Book of Revelation held with unswerving conviction. "And immediately I was in the spirit," he says in the words of our text, an assertion which warrants us in placing reliance on his idealism. Such a preface, I fear, could hardly be affixed to every book these days which after the prevalent fashion of our times propounds fantastic schemes for the reorganisation and future direction of society. "I was in the spirit." In other words, his attitude was one of humility before truth and God, a most desirable orientation of mind for those who sit down to write books ! "And, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne." Thus in his vision of that world which lies beyond these passing scenes in which we live, the first thing that this writer visualised was a throne. The supreme fact of the eternal is, to his mind, that which typifies the primary function of the living Christ, namely, the exercise of a universal sovereignty. Over everything is His throne, broad-based on all the forces, complexities, and contradictions of human life.

This doctrine is in need of emphasis in our times. In facing the complicated issues of this age not only in its social, political, and international aspects, but also in those which are individual and personal, there is an insidious tendency even among avowedly religious people to discount God as an active and vital factor in human affairs. And in passing we may note that this attitude has not been wholly unnoticeable in modern theology, some of which tends to relegate the physical world to the scientist as his domain and to regard the natural universe as a closed system in which the Creator has either definitely limited Himself or has been limited by the operation of His own laws. Such a conception is, of course, fundamentally irreligious. The laws of the natural world are God's laws, and He who made them can suspend them ; and though the life of man is based upon assurance of their regularity, yet ultimately that regularity is subject to the Creator's will, and petitionary prayer regarding them is reasonable, as it is concerning the intervention of Providence in ordinary human affairs.¹ Day by day we repeat, "For thine is the kingdom" ; but to many of us the familiar words fail to convey an adequate sense of their stupendous significance. The statement that His is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, and that He reigns alone as King, is one whose implications we are perhaps none too ready to accept.

Dr. Glover relates in one of his books how, when confronted by the fierce hostility of the young Emperor Charles v., a bigot but an honest one, Martin Luther thus wrote to a friend : " Christ comes and stands at the right hand—not of the Emperor, else we should have perished long ago—but at the right hand of God. This is a great and incredible thing. But I enjoy it, incredible as it is. Some day I mean to die in it, so why should I not live in it ? " That is the faith which this Ascensiontide proclaims. In the heavenly places

¹ Cf. *The Faith that Rebels*, by Dr. D. S. Cairns.

there is set a throne whose foundations are righteousness and judgment and whose almighty occupant is God. Above the strident voices and the tumults of this restless world there lives the Lord of all creation who in His Son, made incarnate in time, has worn our human flesh and who knows man through and through. Tempted in all points like as we are, to Him all hearts are open, all desires known, and from Him no secrets are hid. Men cannot deceive this Judge by subtle pleadings or bombastic oratory. He is not hoodwinked by cunning artifice or skilful duplicity. Into His all-holy eyes His creatures cannot throw the dust of hypocrisy and sham. From His throne He beholds all dwellers on the earth, and with Him the night shineth as the day.

II

To look out upon the conditions of the modern world is to be forced to the conclusion that faith in the throne of God and the inevitability of His judgments, not only hereafter but here and now, is often not more than a half-understood profession of an unassimilated religious idea. Society is seething with disaffected and evil forces plotting and threatening its precarious peace. Our social system is embittered with antagonisms and honeycombed with hatreds, greed, and envy. Amid the clash of the battalions of our contending disputants the bewildered masses pray in depression and despair for some reliable evidences of disinterested intention and consecration of purpose among those who, wielding power over them, dictate their destiny.

And the wider view must not eclipse that personal application of this very disappointing fact which lies much nearer home in the sphere of our own individual experience. There is a danger, while we talk of humanity, of forgetting that we ourselves compose it. For instance, it would be well if many people of quite good intentions who are interested in social problems

were as assiduous and enthusiastic in clearing their own hearts of the slums of class prejudice and selfishness as they are in serving on committees, attending conferences, and building garden cities. The first essential in any ordered life which is to evidence allegiance to Christian principles is the honest recognition of the sovereignty of Christ and of a man's bounden obedience to the will of God which He revealed. A man may act the hypocrite to his great material success, but the God who made him knows. It is quite possible, and it is often done, to play the game of make-believe to the end of one's days. The lie, the fraudulent transaction, the mean deception, the sordid relationship, the concealment of the rags of vice beneath the cloak of virtue, may, if cleverly enough engineered and manipulated with sufficient adroitness, be practised again and again with impunity. But somewhere the Book of Reckoning is being indelibly inscribed. That is very elementary Christian eschatology.

In other days the Judgment Seat of the Most High was perhaps overstressed in its grim severity. An undue emphasis upon the sovereignty of Christ tended to obliterate the gracious love and compassion of the Son of Mary. But if this be an ordered universe and not a mere chaotic concourse of fortuitous atoms, it was nearer the truth than much of that sentimentality which characterises the outlook of so many to-day, and which envisages God as a benevolent nonentity, temperamentally averse to indulging in very acute distinctions between right and wrong, His main function the extending of an indiscriminate forgiveness, and His sense of rectitude and justice reduced to virtual extinction. Our modern religious thought, indeed, tends more in the direction of the creed of the French cynic—"God will pardon; it is His function"—than towards the more robust conception of a Deity who has justice and truth as well as mercy among His attributes.

We repudiate, and rightly repudiate, much of the unbending rigidity of our fathers' theology. In many of its aspects it undoubtedly reflected more of Horeb than of Galilee, and frequently did but poor service in the cause of real Christianity. Yet, while truth adapts itself to increasing knowledge and wider experience, it is not destroyed by adaptation. And there is no fact more true to man's moral and spiritual experience than the fact of God's judgment in his life. There is no lesson which it is more necessary to hammer into the consciousness of this easygoing, irreflectively tolerant, and intellectually slipshod age than this—"Behold, a throne is set in heaven." History bears eloquent testimony to the fate of those generations which forget it.

III

We are just emerging from a land of very dark shadows. For nine days the social and political fabric of this country was in imminent danger of irretrievable catastrophe. But once again the patriotic character of our people has reasserted itself, and we are pulling through. For our escape from the toils of a fearful and ugly thing we are gathered here to-night in St. Giles' to give the praise to God. It is good for us to be here, as it was for the disciples to be on the Mount of Transfiguration. It is a good and fitting thing thus to meet within these walls which through so many ages have sheltered our fathers as in all time of their tribulation they came up hither to seek the face of God.

We have come, I trust, in no mood of bitterness or recrimination, and with no disposition to apportion blame for what has occurred. It is to seek the wisdom which is from above that we are assembled now, and to pray that the peace of God which alone can still the passionate hearts of men may fall on these disturbed and very difficult days. If in our recent trouble mistakes were made and men were misled, if indeed a

hideous blunder was committed which almost precipitated our own country into that struggle in which from the Volga to the Atlantic democracy is battling for its life, it is our desire to put it from our minds. Our gracious Sovereign has voiced the feeling of all men of goodwill—"Forgetting those things which are behind, let us face the future seeking only that which makes for a united and prosperous people."

We have our faults and failings, but our national mind is sober and orderly, and we have reason to be proud of our country. The ship of State has come through heavy weather, and all classes and sections of the people have been severely tested and sorely tried. But save for outbreaks of relatively insignificant disorder, the whole nation has stood self-collected and firm. Though strained and convulsed and exasperated by much wild and ill-considered talk, the country has seen no weapon drawn other than a policeman's baton. There is no other nation under heaven which could have emerged with a like dignity from so embittered a struggle. And one may say this without arrogance, but with a humble and legitimate pride and gratitude.

A fortnight ago, when the gathering storm was about to break, I said to you from this pulpit that what in the impending disaster would exercise the most abiding influence upon the future of our nation would be the measure of courage, loyalty, and forbearance which its people could show themselves as possessing. These qualities have been abundantly displayed. All sorts and conditions of men have been glorified with the spirit of sacrifice and service. The response of the community to the call of the Government has been an extraordinary revelation of the law-abiding steadiness of the national character. And also the chivalry of the men who went on strike, willing as they were to face starvation and misery, not for themselves only but for their wives and children, in order to stand by their friends, contained an element of splendid loyalty and

heroism which we cannot allow to pass without a tribute of genuine admiration. Let us have the honesty and sportsmanship to acknowledge the spirit of self-sacrifice wherever it is in evidence.

Lastly, it is not invidious to mention one name. We have good cause to be thankful for the personal character of our Prime Minister. In his unimpeachable honour and unswerving sense of justice on which political friends and opponents rest with equal confidence, we can discern an influence which more than any other has led us through the darkness to the dawn. Our Christian duty is now to forget that darkness, and with goodwill to all and an earnest desire for peace and just dealing to number ourselves with that goodly fellowship who, in Browning's phrase, are "for the morning."

IV

It was that wise observer of men and affairs, Thomas Carlyle, who warned us that it is generally more profitable to reckon up our defects than to boast of our attainments. We had better do a little stock-taking to-day.

Since the close of the European War we have been living in a disconcerting condition of insecurity. We have been obsessed by a haunting fear of something that was coming. The world of industry has staggered on from year to year in this stifling and threatening atmosphere. Employer and worker alike have been hindered and oppressed by a restless apprehension of steadily approaching disaster. Disputes and the clash of interests resulting in strikes and lock-outs have from time to time embroiled us in suicidal industrial warfare which has held up the normal life of the nation and reacted heavily against a return of commercial stability. All this has kept large sections of our trade in a state of stagnant inactivity. There has been, as a paralysing sequence, a widespread lack of confidence throughout

the whole nation. Men have hesitated and held their hand when in other circumstances they would have been up and doing.

Well, the dreaded crisis has come at last. The thunderclouds have burst and spent their fury. The tempest will doubtless clear the air, and it is generally after the storm that men hear the still small voice of truth and reason. Now that we have experienced what this sort of thing means, we are all likely to be left with wiser heads and larger hearts and more Christian tempers, and a more genuine desire to settle down to that long and steady pull together which this old land, prostrate and crippled, has for years been anxiously awaiting. By God's mercy we have escaped from the very brink of unrelieved tragedy. We must surely now realise the depths of that yawning abyss of social and economic ruin whither our insane fratricidal struggles inevitably propel us.

We have not yet emancipated ourselves from the war mentality. It has been affecting us all. We have been thinking in terms of it. We have been looking wrongly at things. We have seen them distorted and out of perspective through eyes which have been jaundiced by antagonisms and suspicion. There has been on the part of all classes a tendency to listen to the irreflective and careless talk of garrulous persons rather than to square their shoulders to their job. While we must acknowledge our debt to those who undertake for us the conduct of our public affairs, there is no doubt that our troubles have been greatly accentuated by the loose and dangerous eloquence of not a few politicians of all shades of opinion, some of whom, like Gratiano, speak an infinite deal of nothing.

The worker unfortunately has not always evidenced a disposition to recognise how stubborn economic facts can be, nor has the employer always been too ready to admit the primary moral obligation of every industry which is laid down emphatically by the Christian gospel.

That is, that the first charge upon an industry shall be a wage for the worker sufficient to maintain him and his dependants at a standard of living which will enable them to develop to the full the personality with which God has endowed them.

How this is to be accomplished I do not know, nor is it for me to suggest. The pulpit is outwith its province if it interferes with the practical details of such things, and the preacher errs from the path of his duty, and not infrequently develops the characteristics of a mischievous meddler, if, dictating to those who exercise the powers of secular government, he sets himself up as a political economist. But his Master, while refusing to be a judge or a divider in such matters, insistently warned man to beware of covetousness and of the deceitfulness of those things which war against the soul. And the pulpit is commanded by Jesus Christ to reiterate in season and out of season the moral obligations which Christianity demands of men in their business and trafficking. What, then, does Christianity demand? It demands (1) that the primary function of any commercial or industrial enterprise is that of an act of service to the community, and that only when this condition is honestly fulfilled has it a moral right to be a money-making concern; and (2) that such an enterprise stands justified before God not in terms of shareholders' dividends, but in terms of human character—in other words, in terms of the opportunities it affords to all associated with it, employer and employee alike, to live in circumstances which may reasonably be expected to afford them the possibility of a true development of their moral and spiritual capacities.

With the responsibility for this both masters and workmen are burdened. It involves justice and honesty, fidelity in work and contract, and the exercise of a man's best capabilities in the spirit of that love which suffereth long and is kind, and which seeketh not her own.

V

These observations are intimately related to the truth enshrined in our celebration of this Ascensiontide. To-day, with His whole Church throughout the world, we declare ourselves to be the citizens of a kingdom which recognises no geographical, racial, or class distinction, under the kingship of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Crown Him with many crowns,
The Lamb upon His throne !

So we have just sung with full and swelling hearts, hailing Him as the Lord of life, the Lord of peace, and the Lord of love. What do we mean—for we surely must mean something—by those words we have raised in adoration? They are too majestic, too tremendous, for us to have sung them thoughtlessly. Is it not that on the brow once bloody with the crown of sharp and bitter thorns there is set the collective diadem of one who is King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and to whose righteous and blessed will every human principality and power must bow down?

There are some who do not hesitate to tell us that the Church is a spent force, though the remark lacks originality since it has been made so often throughout the last two thousand years. It is no spent force which to-day from pole to pole sends up the shout from hundreds of millions of exultant voices that Jesus Christ is King of Kings. It is no spent force which at this season throughout the civilised world, in great cathedral and in lowly meeting-house, is calling princes and potentates and men of humble lot to place the crown of universal dominion upon the head of the Galilean peasant. And this is a wonderful coronation in which we are participating this Ascensiontide. That crown is emblematic of Christ's rule over every phase of human life. Over your individual life and mine, over

social life and industrial life, over ecclesiastical, political, and international life, Jesus Christ is Lord. That is what we are asserting to-day as our faith, and nothing less than that. He who said to men, "Blessed are the pure in heart ; blessed are the peace-makers ; blessed are the merciful ; blessed are they which hunger and thirst after righteousness ; by this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another"—He is Lord ! And if we give a due consideration to this, it is sufficient to bring us to our knees in this time of national distress, and to make us think about things in general as we have never thought before.

Indeed, brethren, in the blazing light which streams from the throne of His ascended glory, showing up our pride and selfishness, our insincerities and shams, can we not see made manifest the secret of our troubles ? Is it not true that all national stability and social peace are determined only by the conscious recognition on the part of right-minded men and women that Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life, and that He spoke truly when He said, "Without me ye can do nothing" ?

We are beginning, however slowly, to realise that those earthly rules to which men give obedience and those institutions which they build and create rely in the last resort for their security upon the measure of their allegiance to the sovereignty of Christ. History has done its best to teach us that neither laws, nor commercial wealth, nor military power, nor any policy however brilliantly devised and executed, can, if divorced from His mind and spirit, preserve a nation from decay or secure an enduring concord among its people. Men have tried their economic and political experiments in plenty, till there are now few more, if any, left to try. Kings have been dethroned and rulers have been put to death. Various types of governmental machinery have been invented and set up in the place

of others which have been scrapped frequently with ruthless fanaticism. But until the Kingship of Christ has been owned and accepted the ultimate problem on which all else depends is left unsolved and unsettled. Who has the last word in human affairs? What is humanity's final court of appeal? Who is the Lord of all life?

Political structures and economic systems, as such, are limited in their effectiveness as protectors of society. They cannot secure us against the invasion of those sinister and destructive tendencies which lurk in the darker places of the human heart—selfishness and lawless ambition, the blind worship of material things, the lust for power, and the disposition towards oppression, falsehood, and duplicity which these entail. These must remain to curse society, to deceive it, and to break it, till it crowns the Galilean King of Kings.

VI

When in the days of His flesh they asked Him when the Kingdom of God would come, He said that it did not come with observation. It certainly cannot come with strife and wrangling, with bitterness and selfish wrongs. Nor can parliamentary legislation nor the fiat of the most enlightened despotism determine its frontiers. Legislation, however, based upon the will of a rightly educated and Christian community can greatly help to further those frontiers in so far as it expresses His wise and loving and merciful spirit. One day as He walked with His friends, He told them that if any man would come after Him he must take up his cross. It was a straightforward warning that his discipleship meant sacrifice, and willing sacrifice at that. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

In these anxious days that lie ahead, when the future of our nation will be directed either to a richer life and experience or to the valleys of despair and persistent

social strife, I ask you, and I ask myself, in His name to take that warning to heart. Changes are inevitably coming, and we may be sure that not all of them will be to our liking. Will we have the courage to accept and help on what may be personally distasteful to us, if we feel in our inmost conscience that it is in accordance with the will of God? That is what the sovereignty of Christ must mean, and that is what the throne which is set in heaven implies. Its recognition is the supreme test of human loyalty—the readiness to obey the dictates of a heart freely opened to the guidance of God's pure spirit, whatever be the cost. "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." That is the uncompromising command of Him upon whose head to-day you and I have placed the crown, and whose eternal throne we have acknowledged.

Now, if we are going to listen to Him and obey, it is going to cost us dear. We cannot lightly escape from Christ once our ears have been opened to His voice. It must mean for most of us a complete and drastic revolution in all our thoughts and values. But that is the issue, for master and workman, and for every one of us, whatever be our calling, in our relationships with our fellow-men. How far upon the road of change and personal sacrifice the loyal discipleship of Christ is destined to carry us, or to what extent it must disturb existing social conditions, we cannot foresee; but though it be a long way out of our rut of normal complacency, let us remember that such as bravely and selflessly follow Him cannot walk astray. He cannot do His children harm, nor can He lead them wrong; and to walk by His side, in His light, and in His spirit, is to be safe in life and in death.

A recent writer has put our duty thus: "The whole realm of life must be brought under Christ's rule. Submission to Him is freedom for all. Confident faith in God, a courageous acceptance of all that our brotherhood before Him implies, a revaluation of this world in

the light of those eternal realities of the spirit which Christ revealed, and then a ready determination to make any sacrifice to secure their supremacy—that is our privilege.”

VII

And that, by God's grace, we may achieve. So that this great nation which He has so highly exalted, which, despite its many blunderings and sins, has witnessed throughout the world for righteousness and equity and carried far and wide the banner of justice, liberty, and honour—so that this great nation, quickened and purified by its time of suffering and tribulation, may yet rise to a united achievement and a social justice and concord greater and nobler than its past has ever known. For not only all things bright and beautiful, but all things dark and unlovely, work together for good to them that love God.

In the hearts of our people the lamp still burns on the altar of patriotism. Amid the ashes of our humiliation there gleam the fires of chivalry, faith, and righteousness. Still amid our sundered and divided classes there throbs the yearning for a better understanding between man and man, and a rugged faith in our fathers' God is living in us still despite the many secular tendencies of our times. The dissensions and animosities which have soured our corporate life are not worthy of us. They are a betrayal of our common traditions, our history, and our national idealism. In our hearts we know this to be true, and we are not a little ashamed to-day.

Take then thy sceptre, Lord Christ, and reign ! For the kingdom, and the power, and the glory are thine own. Reign over our disordered life, and help us to rebuild the broken walls of the City of our dreams. Remember not against us our offences, but in this green and pleasant land which thou gavest to our fathers, set up thy royal throne again. Yea, reign in the hearts of

young and old, reviving the forgotten duties of justice, brotherhood, and love of thee ; that from the lips of a reunited people, and from the harmony of their common life, may arise this anthem to thy praise : “ Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.”

ADDRESS ON THE DEATH OF THE RIGHT
REV. ANDREW WALLACE WILLIAMSON,
K.C.V.O., D.D., HON. R.S.A.

St. Giles' Cathedral, Sunday Morning, 11th July 1926

[On the morning of Saturday, 10th July 1926, there passed to his rest the Right Reverend Dr. Andrew Wallace Williamson, sometime Moderator of the Church of Scotland, Dean of the Thistle and Chapel Royal, Chaplain-in-Ordinary to H.M. the King, who for sixteen years previously had been Minister of St. Giles' Cathedral. The day of his death was the anniversary of the date, 10th July 1925, on which with profound regret the Presbytery of Edinburgh accepted his resignation of the charge of St. Giles'. Thus closed the earthly career of one whose name had become a household word among Scotsmen at home and abroad. He stood for all that was best in the religious and patriotic traditions of his race, and it is no more than true to say that he went to his grave amid the sorrow of the whole northern people. His benign and gracious presence, his lofty idealism and his humility towards God, his transparent goodness and spiritual strength, no less than the great gifts which raised him from his brethren to be the supreme representative figure of the Scottish Church, have bequeathed an added splendour to the great traditions of St. Giles'.]

THERE is but one thought in our minds this morning. Andrew Wallace Williamson is dead, and the Scottish nation is mourning the loss of one of its greatest sons. Yesterday there came to its close a career which for brilliance, power, and outstanding influence has had but few parallels in the history of the Church of Scotland.

Five-and-forty years ago there left the Divinity Hall of Edinburgh University a young man who throughout his college course had exercised a peculiar spell over his contemporaries. The average undergraduate is not

always too prone to recognise among his fellows the beginnings of a noble intellect ; but in Andrew Wallace Williamson the luminous glow of latent mental and spiritual strength was already too obvious to be unseen or miscalculated even by the least prescient of his youthful brethren. They called him the "Electric Student," and dimly felt, but with curious certainty, that he was destined to greatness and to the leadership of his generation. Their prophetic instinct was amply justified, and with a startling rapidity.

With dramatic suddenness he leaped into fame. When only twenty-seven years of age, and having already for fifteen months been Minister of North Leith, one of the largest congregations in the kingdom, he was called in 1883 to be Collegiate Minister of St. Cuthbert's, Edinburgh. There, a blazing star in the ecclesiastical firmament, he remained for twenty-six wonderful years, until, when called to this charge in 1910, he brought to the service of St. Giles' a mighty pulpit reputation which was honoured throughout the English-speaking world. I do not intend to dwell upon the great events of his public career, upon his high statesmanship which has secured for him his niche in the history of the Scottish Church, upon his extraordinary gifts and abilities, upon the varied stages of that triumphant progression from strength to strength which was the record of his earthly life, upon the royal and civic and academic and ecclesiastical honours with which King and Church and College and People strove to recognise his abounding service to his age. Others will do that elsewhere, and will do it far better. I merely want this morning to speak of him as you knew him best, as the tender-hearted, kindly, simple-minded minister of Jesus Christ. And I have a right thus to speak of him to you. For I, like yourselves, knew him and loved him well.

He was intimately associated with several solemn and sacred events in my own family, and I was early alive to that greatness of heart, that depth of sensitive under-

standing, and that unfathomable human sympathy which were his most distinctive characteristics. He was simply in love with humanity, and in a unique degree he bore men's griefs and carried their sorrows. Modest and unassuming, utterly unconscious of his own greatness, he moved among his people quietly and unobtrusively, his one ambition to be the shepherd of their souls. Many of you, remembering how he entered into your joys and sorrows, will fully appreciate what I mean when I say that his smile was like God's sunshine and his presence was a benediction. Men who occupy public positions are inevitably the targets of criticism, and often captious criticism. But from this he suffered less than most. His transparent honesty, his genuine goodness, and the shining loveliness of his soul were such that criticism was silenced and could not live. He loved greatly and gave greatly, and therefore himself was greatly loved.

In Andrew Wallace Williamson the pastoral instinct was most remarkably developed, and in him, if ever in any man, the Gospel was adorned and the ministry exalted. And to the exercise of that ministry, in its pure and simple form, he deliberately sacrificed the dominating enthusiasm of his life—his love of and aptitude for literature. If Scotland gained in him her greatest Christian minister, she lost a man of letters. Yes, and when called to one of the highest offices of the academic world,¹ he refused it, a position of honour and dignity, preferring to remain with his people and to continue to shoulder the exacting duties and onerous labours of his sacred office here among you. How he laboured, all of you know. How he fulfilled his crowding and innumerable tasks, all of you must have wondered. How he inspired and sustained you during the grim and anxious years of the Great War, you will remember with lasting gratitude. Never sparing himself, too courteous and gracious to deny his services to

¹ Principal and Vice-Chancellor of St. Andrews University.

anyone, he worked and worked. On to the end, loyal to duty, fighting against weakness and physical weariness, he struggled with dogged and pathetic heroism to fulfil his ministry till, under the strain of increasing years and increasing infirmity, that magnificent mind and massive frame gave way.

He has indeed left a name behind him—that of the most brilliant and honoured ecclesiastic of his generation, of a lofty patriot, a scholar, a preacher, a man of affairs, of a Prince in Israel. But the brightest jewel in the diadem of his memory is that to all who knew him, and to thousands who did not, his name will abide as synonymous with human sympathy in its beauty and perfection. Indeed, “he bore without abuse the grand old name of gentleman.” In his passing there has gone from us something of dignity, of spiritual calm, of grave sweetness of disposition, of natural nobility, of gentle culture but of rugged strength, that composed a personality quite unique and which we are not likely to see again. When we remember the smile that never failed, the hand that was always ready to help and bless, the voice that was always kind, we know that no victory which he won in the great world was comparable in enduring worth to the throne which he builded for himself and from which he reigned in our hearts.

So, without pain, encompassed by a universal love, his great spirit has passed—

Gathered to the quiet west,
The sundown splendid and serene.

Yea, and the breathings of that spirit will be felt in our souls till too for us, as now for him, death is swallowed up in victory. Here, for a thousand years voices have proclaimed to men the salvation of our God. Here, for centuries after we are dust, will voices still proclaim that old sweet story. Yet surely, when at last the Books are opened, the roll of those who in this place have preached the Word and broken the Bread of Life will

contain no nobler and more unspotted name than that of Andrew Wallace Williamson.

Ours is the grief, but his the great reward. We who have loved him will not forget him. One day beyond these shadows, and on some happier shore, we will greet him in the brightness of the morning. Unto the blessed gladness of which meeting, may God in His mercy bring us !

ADDRESS AT THE UNVEILING AND DEDICATION
OF A STAINED-GLASS WINDOW IN MEMORY
OF JOHN M'LEOD CAMPBELL

*In the Parish Church of Rhu,¹ Dumbartonshire,
26th October 1926*

I

ONE hundred years ago John M'Leod Campbell, a youth of five-and-twenty, was ordained and inducted to this parish. It was then a small and peaceful clachan, clinging to the fringe of the Celtic Highlands. His ministry, however, was of brief duration, for six years later he was deposed as a heretic by the General Assembly. Well, the whirligig of time makes curious work of men's most cherished convictions. To-day this large and representative congregation has met to dedicate a memorial window, the fruit of a national appeal, to the glory of God and in thanksgiving that John M'Leod Campbell lived. *Tempora mutantur, nos et mutamur in illis !*

To me it is a high honour to be thus associated with you at this hour. The name of Campbell is among my earliest memories. How often have I heard the story of his martyrdom told and retold in my old home yonder across the Narrows at Rosneath ! As a child, I have played around his grave hard by the manse where I was born, and spelled out haltingly the letters on his tombstone over which the roses clamber.

¹ The name of the parish has recently been changed from Row to Rhu, the latter being its original spelling.

Achnashie, that beautiful abode where at last by the waters of the Gareloch, and within sight of Row which he never ceased to love, his bruised spirit found peace and healing, is to me a house of gracious remembrance. Campbell's distinguished sons were my father's friends and neighbours, and his grandson Kenneth, so like his grandsire in soul and character, was mine. He fought by my side in our Dumbartonshire battalion of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, and he sleeps near the walls of Ypres. For Kenneth's sake, especially, I am glad and proud to be here to-day.

This is a very remarkable service. The curtain of the past is rung up before our eyes. Down the vistas of a century we are looking again on the stage of that pitiful succession of bigotries and blunderings which, to the humiliation of the Church of Scotland, have been recorded on her history as the Row Heresy.

There amid those scenes, those "old, unhappy, far-off things," behold young Campbell, his eyes agleam with the beauty of holiness! There he stands, convinced and courageous, remote in spiritual serenity from the controversies of his generation, nailing the colours of his new evangel to the mast. And there, too, are the inflexible protagonists of dogmatic orthodoxy, massing themselves to encompass his destruction. On the wings of dreams we now are carried through the dreary process of the prosecution of that high-souled victim as it drags its interminable way through the courts of the Church to its culmination in the historic all-night sitting of the General Assembly of 1831.

The pale light of dawn is filtering through the lofty windows when the fateful sentence is pronounced and Campbell is driven forth beyond the ecclesiastical pale as a perverter of Christianity and an enemy of the faith. In our ears there sounds the echo of his aged father's voice as in the hush that succeeds the passing of the

verdict it rings dramatically through the Assembly : "The Church may cast him out, but God will not cast him out ; and while I live I will never be ashamed to be the father of so holy and blameless a son."

Yes ; this is indeed a very remarkable service, for that was only one hundred years ago. And here and now to-day in this place from which the intolerance of men expelled him, Scotland is expiating the sins of the fathers. Once more the fundamental truth of life which is blazoned across the lower lights of this memorial window has been abundantly vindicated : "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

II

"Holy and blameless" indeed was Campbell. Men no more worthy than he have been canonised for sanctity.

Early in his ministry he assumed the rôle of a prophet. This, however, is a calling which history has proved to be a thankless one. The fashion of stoning the ambassadors of light which Jerusalem set long ago is the only fashion which the folly of mankind has never suffered to become out of date. When Campbell began his career, equipped with an exceptionally well-assorted intellectual armoury, the theology of Scotland was in a condition of atrophy, the dismal legacy of the eighteenth century. There was plenty of talk about religion and much discursive exaggeration of doctrinal minutiae. There was also a universal disposition towards acrid and polemical discussion over ecclesiastical affairs. The pulpits, in which there were few good preachers, were characterised by a turgid exposition of the Westminster Confession and the five points of Calvinism. But there was small evidence of

what thirty years later John Caird boldly began to preach as "religion in common life."

So, at least, Campbell declared from his own experience at Row. "I am daily made to see more and more clearly," said he, "the blackness of the darkness which so prevails in this land of professing Christians." Those who, deploring the spiritual degeneracy of our times, sigh for the good days that are gone, must not infrequently feel embarrassed even by the nineteenth century. As late as its sixties Norman MacLeod was still persuaded that to a large extent the Christianity of Scotland was but reactionary Judaism.

The time at my disposal forbids more than the most superficial survey of the innovation which Campbell's teaching imposed upon contemporary thought. He made, in the first place, the Bible, and the Bible alone, the quarry whence he hewed his message. This was startling enough and causative of suspicion in an age whose pulpit oratory was based solely on the Confession of Faith. He was impressed by the lack of vital piety and genuine religion among the people, and what interest they had in those wordy disputes which circled round the letter of Holy Writ only intensified his dismay at their ignorance of the spirit which giveth life.

The reason for this spiritual stagnation he felt to lie in the fact that men did not adequately appreciate the first elementary principle of Christianity, which is a personal assurance of the love of God towards them as revealed in Christ. This truth, he was convinced, had been obliterated beneath the stern implications of the theory of election and predestination which was the dominating conception of the day.

And thus he worked out his doctrine of the assurance of faith, from which position a logical deduction was clear. How could a man be assured that God loved him, unless Christ died for all men and his salvation was not limited to the foreordained elect? Campbell's answer was his theory of universal atonement—that is,

that the infinite mercy of God extended to all His creatures. This to some seemed flatly to contradict, though in point of fact it did not, the main contentions of the Calvinistic system.

The first antagonistic whispers began two years after his ordination. They rapidly grew in volume till in 1831 they culminated in the heresy charge that ended in his deposition.

III

The Row Heresy indeed was one of the evil fruits of an age which had drugged itself into mental torpor by a slavish addiction to catchwords. None can read the sorrowful record of that case without being painfully aware that there was nothing in it which could possibly justify so catastrophic a climax. It was a succession of confusion of thought, bungling over phrases, misinterpretation of ideas, and persistent mutual misunderstandings.

Campbell's doctrine of universal atonement was misconstrued and twisted into being a crude assertion of indiscriminate salvation for everybody, irrespective either of personal religion or morality. And the temper of the day was not such as could readily grasp the palpable absurdity of such a charge. The air was ringing with the formulae of theologians passionately devoted to traditional forms of expression, and undoubtedly many of those who sat in judgment on Campbell misread his mind through sheer lack of that penetrating spiritual insight which was his.

All that the persecuted young clergyman had done was to attempt some mitigation of the harsh severity of a rigid system of doctrine which at the time held Scotland in a vice. He had opened up new vistas to the longing eyes of men, and had poured the healing oil of a more real conception of the love of God and man's personal relationship to his Creator upon weary human

hearts which but dimly understood either the one or the other.

But the impression grew that he was organising a movement to upset the Calvinistic system, and the charity and forbearance which might have averted the disaster were ousted by a bitter resentment. The Church was in no mood for argument with him, and the fact that at the beginning of his ministry he had resolved to keep clear of the two rival ecclesiastical parties who held the field reacted against him and sealed his doom. For, acutely divided as they were, both Moderates and Evangelicals found in the persecution of Campbell a cause in which they could whole-heartedly unite.

His deposition, as we can see in our more chastened days, was an act of overt injustice, an exhibition of cruel intolerance, a tragic blunder of colossal magnitude which ere many years the Church of Scotland was bitterly to regret. Principal Shairp declared it to be the stoning by the Church of her best prophet and her deliberate rejection of the highest light vouchsafed to her at the time.

IV

We may remember with thankfulness that later circumstances did much to heal the wounds with which Campbell's sensitive soul was lacerated. He was made well aware of the penitent recognition by the Church of the wrongs she had done him.

For a while, after his deposition, he ministered to an independent congregation which built for him a chapel in Blackfriars Street in Glasgow ; but his health broke down and he had to discontinue preaching. In his loneliness—and there is no loneliness like the loneliness of misunderstanding—he was sustained by the devotion of a circle of loyal friends. But though bruised, his soul knew no rancour. No sense of injury embittered

that big charitable heart. When he gave up his chapel in Glasgow he advised his people to remain no longer aloof but to return to the Church that had cast him out. Thereafter he gave himself up to the life of a scholar, and saw the tide that had swept him from the ministry slowly begin to turn. He published several books developing his own line of thought, and ere long became an intellectual force recognised far beyond the confines of Scotland. Anglican as well as presbyterian divines sought his friendship and hung upon his words. Even Cardinal Manning thought it worth his while to have discussions with him.

Profoundly moulding and directing the religious thought of the century, he was pressed to enter the ministry of the Church of England, and it was no secret that the leaders of the Church of Scotland would gladly have atoned for the past and taken him back to their fellowship. All such suggestions he courteously declined and continued to walk alone. As time went on he could not but know himself to be the leaven that was leavening the Scottish Church, now in the singular process of being converted by the heretic she had cast from her house. A new light, brighter and more mellow, was breaking over Scotland.

Honours began to fall upon Campbell. Glasgow University, led by John Caird, made him a Doctor of Divinity and publicly acknowledged him as one of the greatest theological scholars of his generation. Manifold evidences of esteem showered upon him. A public testimonial at last embodied the respect and affection of the whole country. In 1872 he died at Achnashie—the field of peace—that lovely home which one of his admirers, James Graham of Auldhouse, had purchased for him at Rosneath, facing across the Gareloch to his beloved Row. And in Rosneath's ancient churchyard, where he sleeps hard by the dust of St. Modan, his grave is still a shrine to which the feet of many a pilgrim turn in gratitude and veneration,

As the sands of life were running out he looked back on the stony road his feet had trod, but saw nothing there save the radiant glow of sunset tranquillity. "These things," he said, "are in the hand of God, and what has been is best."

V

In not permitting the centenary of this courageous Christian pioneer to pass unnoticed, the minister and kirk session of this parish have indeed done well. Here in this place of sacred memory it is most proper that his name should be perpetuated. Generation after generation will from the imagery of this memorial window derive an inspiration towards high idealism. To the eyes of multitudes yet unborn the light that falls through its coloured glass will gleam with the radiance of the saints climbing upward through tribulation to that diadem which God hath prepared for them that love Him. It was the heart's agony and spiritual anguish of John M'Leod Campbell which went far to pay the price of that intellectual liberty and calm religious atmosphere which we enjoy to-day. He did not shrink from crucifixion on the cross of his conscience, and it is our faith that beyond his cross long since he has laid hold upon an incorruptible crown.

In one of his notable passages Lord Rosebery contemplates the dark battalions of humanity marching through the ages silent and unknown to the grave. But here and there stand forth the figures which mark the milestones of their journey—those who, in Ben Jonson's words, are not of an age, but for all time. John M'Leod Campbell is one of these.

And should it be that from out the bourne whither the floods of death have carried him, his spirit has returned to watch what now we do, surely looking on the travail of his soul he will be satisfied. Surely indeed amid that blessedness which eye hath not seen, nor ear

heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to
conceive, this which we here have sung to-day must
now be the burden of his joyful song :

O thou, my soul, do thou return
unto thy quiet rest ;
For largely, lo, the Lord to thee
his bounty hath exprest.

ADDRESS AT THE LAYING UP OF COLOURS
OF THE ROYAL SCOTS

St. Giles' Cathedral, 5th December 1926

[The colours which were handed over by Lieutenant-General Sir Edward Altham, K.C.B., K.C.I.E., Colonel of the Regiment, consisted of four colours (two stands) belonging to the First Battalion, dated 1826 and 1876, and two Union Flags of the Great War, belonging respectively to the Twelfth and Thirteenth (Service) Battalions.]

I

THIS is an occasion in which sentiments of old-time romance are revived and blended with living religious idealism. Impressive as such ceremonial must be anywhere and in whatever surroundings, in St. Giles' an additional solemnity attaches to the commemoration of Scottish valour. To this temple, hallowed by Scotland's faith and love, like homing birds the great traditions of your regiment which are embodied in these colours to-day come winging back across the years to find a dwelling-place.

This is no meaningless and empty parade. It is not hollow-sounding pomp and circumstance. We do this in humble recognition of Almighty God, who is the Governor among the nations. It is because these colours stood for loyalty, courage, faith, and duty that we have confidence in bringing them to this holy place. There is no imagination that can remain unstirred as up this historic cathedral, beneath those flags which droop above nave and aisle and transept, and which in days gone by the reverent hands of your forebears carried here for custody, yet other colours are borne to find

their resting-place within the tabernacles of the Most High.

What memories cluster round these emblems that you bring ! Through times of stress they have carried high the honour of your famous regiment. It is a regiment of which Scotland is very proud, the oldest regiment of the British Army, and perhaps, as you maintain it to be, the oldest regiment in Christendom. And now, their service over, you have carried these ensigns hither to lay them up beneath this ancient roof and amid this immemorial calm,

Safe in the hallowed quiet of the past.

II

Yours is a goodly heritage who wear the uniform of the Royal Scots. To read the list of your battle-honours is to read a thrilling record of British fortitude throughout two hundred and fifty years. From Tangier in 1680 to the South African Campaign, eight-and-twenty battlefields witnessed the courage and endurance of your regiment in the continents of Europe, Asia, Africa, and America. Then, bursting like a tornado on the life of your own generation, came the storm and fury of the European War, sweeping the whole earth with its fiery breath and carrying before it to the brink of destruction the civilisation of two thousand years. In this the wildest tumult of the world's history, while empires crumbled to the dust and thrones and principalities collapsed in ruin, you remained erect and firm, steadfast and immovable as the rocks upon your native hills.

The bugles sounded. In answer to the call this whole nation became a mighty army. As if by the stroke of a magician's wand, a vast civilian population rose and stood resolute and armed to face the threatening foe. The three regular battalions of your regiment expanded to thirty-five, fifteen of which, fed by the

remainder, were on constant service overseas. This in itself is a dramatic synopsis of the story of that national transformation. During these dark and terrible years, one hundred thousand men passed through the Royal Scots' ranks. No less than forty thousand of them were maimed and wounded, and the home-coming of more than eleven thousand—peace to their gallant souls!—was not to us but unto God.

From more than seventy fierce engagements, each one of them more than worthy of honourable mention, ten have been selected for the new colours which now have replaced those which we lay up to-day. They are names written in letters of imperishable remembrance on the scroll of our country's history.

III

Officers, non-commissioned officers, and men, past and present, of the Royal Scots—no victory is ever won but the price of it must be paid. The honours of your regiment were dearly bought at the cost and jeopardy of brave men's lives. Around and behind these flags you have carried here there stands, their glorious and immortal escort, a silent unseen army. In a service such as this there is nothing so humbling and yet so inspiring as to remember that we company with the mighty dead. The spirits of those who died beneath your flag for king and country, hearth and home, and whose nameless bodies, long since dust, await the trump of God on many a far-flung field, are they not with us now?

Some centuries since, so Dr. Maclean Watt relates, in a certain clan battle among our western hills an intrepid Highland chief, wounded unto death, fell bleeding in his tartans among the moorland heather. His clansmen, dismayed at the loss of their leader and lacking the encouragement of his kingly presence, lost heart, gave way, and turned to effect a cowardly retreat.

But the dying chief, raising himself on his elbow, called out to them as they hurried by, "My children, my eyes are on you still, to see that you are true!" And at his voice they stayed their steps, and to a man they returned to the fight again.

On you, my brothers, there rest the eyes of an invisible host. To you from their dead hands the patriot's torch has been passed. See, then, that you continue to bear it high. "Brave men were living before Agamemnon"; and in you, brave men are living still.

IV

This regiment whose honour is in your keeping has represented much that typifies the peculiar character of the Scottish people. Let it be your aim to preserve this tradition. Without arrogance or contempt of others, but with quiet determination, endeavour to maintain the distinctive genius of Scotland. By your example counter each influence that would tend to weaken those qualities of sturdy self-reliance, robust fidelity, and dogged perseverance in the loyal execution of work and duty which have been your country's pride. To none more than to those who serve and have served beneath the colours of a Scottish regiment do we look as trusty guardians of the best in our nation's history. We are confident that you will always count it your especial privilege to watch over and to keep in life and vigour what has been worthy and of good report in the annals of this land.

For God and for St. Andrew! That is the slogan of your race. St. Andrew's Cross is emblazoned on our national flag. It is, I need not remind you, embodied in your regimental badge.

As the Scottish race expanded and developed from its early beginnings, and its people gradually welded into unity began to portray characteristics of their own, it became increasingly evident that the choice of

St. Andrew as their patron saint, a choice made eleven hundred years ago at the union of the Picts and Scots, was not inapposite. Is one who sealed his allegiance to his Master's cause upon a cross not a fitting patron for a people whose story, despite its darker chapters, contains so much of reckless disposition to sacrifice itself, its blood and treasure, on the altars of its faith, and to fling self-interest to the winds for those to whom it had pledged its love?

That the Scot is too familiar with both sides of a half-penny is a favourite theme for the cheap humorist. It persists in popularity despite the continuous and universal evidences of Scottish generosity. But were the innuendo as true as it is false, it would not impair the spiritual dignity of a race whose history rings with the echoes of chivalry and of selfless devotion, even though at times deplorably misguided, to their own particular religious and political conceptions.

V

Once upon a time, on the grassy slopes about Bethsaida, our Lord was faced with the problem of satisfying the physical hunger of a travel-stained and weary multitude. This is not an irrelevant digression. In that story and in the part St. Andrew played in it there is something very reminiscent of the Scottish character. The situation, you will remember, seemed impossible. Our Lord and His disciples had no supplies. There were no shops nor stores anywhere within reach of them. St. Philip indeed had already given up the idea of feeding the crowd as quite outwith the limits of practical consideration. But St. Andrew, our patron, beneath whose aegis your regiment stands, saw possibilities, remote and infinitesimal though they might appear to be. But as possibilities, to him they were worth attention, and he spoke of them to his Master.

He had noticed, so he said, a lad who had five loaves

and two small fishes. He pointed him out with diffidence, and mentioned the paltry assets with hesitation. Yet that they might be of use in the hands of One greater than himself he somehow dimly felt. Hunger faced them. St. Andrew seized on the only thing available to meet the crisis. It was poor enough, in truth, and apparently wholly inadequate. But he took it and laid it at the feet of Christ, and then left the issue of it all to Him.

I have said that to refer to this story was no irrelevant digression. Nor is it. Here is its connection with ourselves.

In the perplexing situation that faced St. Andrew at Bethsaida, on one point he was clear. The last word was most certainly with Christ. Taking what he had to Him, he committed it to One with whom all things were possible. Is it far-fetched to discover in the story of this nation a frequent reflection of St. Andrew's attitude that day? Our national record has its blots and stains, God knows. We have had in plenty our national follies and transgressions. But did Scotland, on the whole, ever doubt that in its crises the final appeal must always be to God? May we not claim that throughout our political and religious struggles, though often in bigotry and animated at times by fanaticism, our people fought and died that there might be left no dubiety in the minds of the mighty of the earth that the King of Kings was the only potentate? There are no limits to the endurance of a people who take their stand on such an ideal. For them

behind the dim unknown

Standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch above
His own.

The cross of St. Andrew is not on your badge for nothing. It stands for much that you will be wise to lay to heart and to remember.

VI

It is true that to the Christian his country is the world and his countrymen are all mankind. But as a Scotsman is no less a patriot because in all his straths and hills and glens and isles there is no place in his affections like his own home, so too he may honour and respect all peoples but love his own dear country best.

Our fathers' sepulchres are here,
And here our kindred dwell,
Our children, too ; how could we love
Another land so well ?

Yes ; to quote the words of Lincoln, the mystic chords of memory stretch from every battlefield and patriot grave to every living heart and hearth-stone. Each familiar story and tradition, the mantle of beauty and of colour which Nature has flung with generous abandon over our plains and mountains, each haunting folk-song, the native music that searches the recesses of each loyal Scottish heart, each stirring deed, each venerated name in our long and chequered story, are part of the treasure of our souls.

Breathes there the man with soul so dead
Who never to himself hath said,
This is my own, my native land !

You carry on your shoulders the responsibility of the guardianship of our shores. You carry, too, responsibility for the peace and tranquillity of the world. Fight the good fight of faith, and preserve your calling in honour. You have cause for just pride in your uniform, for you do not wear it in order to pillage other nations, wage selfish and aggressive warfare, and conduct yourselves as international brigands, but that you may be ambassadors of peace, maintain justice, guarantee the security of civilisation, and thereby help to bring nearer the day when nation shall not lift up sword against

nation, neither shall they learn war any more. Our imperial mission is not the conquest but the service of the world.

VII

The extremist is very much abroad these days. But destructive criticism, if of value, must be accompanied by a constructive policy to take the place of that which has been repudiated and condemned. This applies particularly to that section of opinion which the horror of the Great War has stampeded to the support of an unqualified pacifism. The League of Nations, the supreme moral adventure of mankind, is itself denounced by such on the ground that its authority rests in the last resort upon the use of armed force.

Well, we who name the name of Christ all are and must be pacifists, since in His service we are committed to the cause of peace and to follow after justice and goodwill. We do not dispute that war is "the most horrible of occasional necessities," or that in its sheer insanity, its criminal squandering of life and wealth and character, it has been proved completely bankrupt in producing any lasting betterment for society. We do not advocate it, nor support it, nor do we seek it. We know but too well that, in Pindar's phrase, war is sweet only to those who never proved it. There can be no doubt among fair-minded men that if a policy of general disarmament were to be genuinely and simultaneously undertaken by all the Powers, Great Britain would be its most honest and ardent supporter.

But, until that day comes, we have reason for our belief that an Empire which, despite its critics and the sneers of those who do not wish it well, remains the first moral influence in international affairs, is doing better service to the world at large by preserving its own navies and armies as sureties alike of national safety and international honour, than by embracing any project which is opposed to the dictates of wisdom.

Let us avoid encouraging the irresponsible warmonger by ourselves propounding foolish and impracticable fantasies. In the interests of peace itself we ought ruthlessly to suppress extravagance of statement.

In disarmament, while we will advance with our neighbours step by step—yes, and perhaps two steps for their one—we cannot advance alone, trusting that others may be disposed eventually to follow our example. We have duties not only to ourselves. We owe responsibility to many backward races to whom we have promised our protection during their own political development. We cannot in honour leave them to be a possible prey to the unscrupulous ambitions of strong and aggressive peoples. And if the normal conditions of our present international life necessitate the conservation of our armed forces in order that we may be adequately prepared to fulfil those guarantees, we must in common honesty respect that fact, however it may reflect upon society in general.

At the same time it is our religious duty to evidence in social, political, and diplomatic relationships that spirit of justice, charity, and friendliness which shall serve to render needless the active employment of military weapons.

It is through disuse that functions decay. And it is not by the pursuit of irreflective policies calculated not to bring peace to the world but to open up the way to greater disorder and give to evildoers unrestricted opportunity to wreak their will upon the weak and defenceless, but by the exaltation of the spirit of Christ in the hearts of men and in the councils of the nations, that war will be rendered slowly but inevitably more and more remote. In a growing sense of Christian brotherhood and mutual dependence upon the great Father of all, the nations will find amid a stable and ordered civilisation their true incentive to beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning-hooks.

VIII

So, patriots each one of us, but true internationalists as well, since as Christians we pray for the coming of the Kingdom of God, conscious too of our kinship with the past and surrounded as we are by a thousand unseen influences, we now lay up these colours in this their final home. Of them, those of 1826 are likely to be the last laid up within this church which have actually been carried on the field of battle. From the strife of the world we have brought them to this cloistered peace. Here we now leave them encircled by their memories ; and here their honour is for evermore secure.

ADDRESS AT THE OPENING OF THE SCOTTISH NATIONAL WAR MEMORIAL

(With tribute to the memory of the architect, Sir Robert Stodart Lorimer)

14th July 1927

[The following address was delivered from the entrance to the drawbridge of Edinburgh Castle on the occasion of the opening, by H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, of the now world-famous Scottish National War Memorial. It was amplified by means of a microphone and loud speakers arranged at different points to the vast assemblage which thronged the Castle Esplanade and stretched in thousands down the Lawnmarket to the High Street.

The scene on the densely-crowded Esplanade, coloured by naval and military pageantry, has had no parallel in the history of Edinburgh. Thrilled spectators thronged the hoary Castle battlements, and every window, balcony, and roof was occupied as well. Below, the Scottish capital lay quiet in the golden summer mist, a fairy city of sparkling panes and flashing spires. In the soft distance gleamed the waters of the Forth, washing the historic shores of the Port of Leith. Eastward, the massive bulk of Arthur's Seat, the sentinel of ages, loomed through the shimmering haze.

The ceremonial of that morning began with a memorable spectacle. Headed by massed pipe-bands, the colours of the Scottish Regiments, which had been assembled before the West Door of St. Giles' Cathedral, were carried amid reverent crowds through the Lawnmarket, across the Castle Esplanade, over the drawbridge, and up the winding cobbled lane of the Castle to Crown Square. There they took up their position before the doorway of the Memorial preparatory to their being borne with solemn ritual into the Hall of Honour to be placed by their respective Regimental Memorials.

It was immediately after the passing of the colours that this address was given.]

FELLOW-CITIZENS of Edinburgh, and fellow-countrymen!
That which now we are about to do is not local to this

city but national in its significance. It is our privilege to be participants in a signal episode in Scotland's history. Surely none is present here whose heart is not filled by an emotion whose depth no words could fitly convey. There are times, and this indeed is one of them, when human speech is of little avail, and we are driven to seek for adequacy in the silent but eloquent language of the soul.

To this giant crag, this home and nursery of Scottish kings, whose austere brow the vanished centuries have crowned with proud heroic memories, we have come from every part of Scotland to take our share in the consecration of a noble emblem. Within these bastions which throughout the ages have looked upon so much of the pageantry of our race, the Scottish National War Memorial will proclaim to the future the glory of the sons and daughters of our own generation.

In the Great War of the nations they went forth at the call of duty. Comfort, ease, ambition they forswore. The visions and the dreams of youth they quietly surrendered. They counted not their life dear unto them, and were faithful unto death. From the hills of the north, from the isles of the west, from the straths of the lowlands, and from across the seas they came responsive to their Mother's cry. Scotland's leal children were they, selfless and reliable as their country knew that they would be in the gravest hour of the Empire's need. Because they came, and because they died, liberty has still her dwelling-place among us and fills our glens and mountains with the music of her holy songs.

We, who through the clemency of divine Providence, and by our brethren's sacrifice, have been brought in peace and safety to this hour, have long cherished a pious and loving desire. It has been our earnest wish, and to-day we see it realised, to commemorate their names in the heart of Scotland. There could be no site more appropriate than this from the Pentland Firth

to the shores of the Solway whereon to perpetuate their memory.

The factors that contribute to the creation of that elusive thing called nationality are many. Forces geographical, linguistic, racial, economic, and religious come into play and weave their distinctive pattern. But the supreme essentials are more than these. They are a common history, the appreciation of triumphs shared and disasters and sufferings mutually endured, the possession of honoured names and historic personalities, of revered anniversaries, and, above all, of places that are sacred. Such places, and innumerable, this country has. For Scotsmen there stirs in Iona the throb of religious fervour ; on Bannockburn there swells the pride of sturdy independence ; on the slopes of Flodden patriotism rears its unconquerable but bloody head ; on Culloden Moor there quivers an incommunicable sorrow and a yearning love. But the grim and castled rock of Edinburgh has especially gathered to and embodied in itself the patriotic enthusiasm of the Scottish people.

Back in the shadows of unrecorded time lies the origin of this mighty fortress. What savage warrior first built his eyrie on those frowning heights ? We wander uncertain in the mists of our earliest story, glimpsing perchance the skin-clothed tribesmen of some Pictish king lurking on the crest of this rocky fastness, or Edwin of Northumbria gazing from its ramparts. But certain we are that it is nine hundred years and more since the monarchs of Scotland first had their dwelling here.

If stones had speech, what tales these stones could tell ! They would speak of Margaret, queen and saint ; of Randolph, Earl of Moray, scaling these cliffs with his gallant thirty men ; of Mary, Queen of Scots, and of Kirkcaldy of Grange, her doughty champion, at bay for her sake within these walls ; of the Regent Morton and yonder Half-Moon Battery ; of Cromwell's Ironsides engaged in grim, determined siege ; of the last

sleep of Argyle and of the chivalrous Montrose ; of Bonnie Dundee and of Prince Charlie ; of captivity and escape, of assault and defence, of deeds of violence and deeds of valour, of parliaments and priests and kings, of royal birth and death.

Where else save on this rock, the crown of Scotland's capital, beautiful for situation, mantled in romance, central in Scottish history, familiar to the whole earth, could we have so fitly raised a monument to Scotland's dead ?

“ Let us now praise famous men, and our fathers that begat us . . . their bodies are buried in peace, but their name liveth for evermore.” We approach this ceremony in profound humility. We are conscious, as in the presence of the fallen we cannot fail to be, of our own exceeding unworthiness. Nor can we forget that, under God, by the free spirit of sacrifice which animated them have been preserved to us our liberties, the sacred privileges of a free people, and all that men hold dear. This ground on which we stand, hallowed by so many memories, is a solemn trysting-place. Here the present is compelled to look the past and the future in the face.

We offer now this great memorial—like unto which the world has produced none other—its artistic and architectural splendour, and the spiritual beauty of its symbolism and appeal, in proud and thankful remembrance of those who died for us. But a memorial of their sacrifice more precious, and without which all else is poor, unreal, and vain, is the consecration of our heart and the dedication of our will and purpose, for their sake, to the ideals of justice, truth, and national righteousness, and to the extension throughout the earth of the Peace of God.

To many of you here present the attendant ceremonial of this hour, though giving rise to emotions of honourable pride, must inevitably also stab the heart and dim the eye. The wounds of the bereaved to which the merciful alchemy of time has brought some

healing cannot but ache and throb again to-day.
Memories come thronging back, and tears—

the awful language, eloquent
Of infinite affection ; far too big
For words.

May all such find their peace and comfort in remembrance of the Cross of Christ and in the precious hopes which flow from it concerning those who, following the gleam, are faithful to the end ! Whoso loseth his life shall find it. They are not dead, but live.

“ Holy is the true light and passing wonderful, lending radiance to them that endured in the heat of the conflict ; from Christ they inherit a home of unfading splendour, wherein they rejoice with gladness evermore.”

[On 13th September 1929, Sir Robert Stodart Lorimer, K.B.E., LL.D., the famous architect of the Scottish National War Memorial, died in Edinburgh after a brief illness, at the age of 65. The following address was delivered at a memorial service held in St. Giles' Cathedral on the 17th September at the hour of the funeral at Sir Robert's country home in Fife.]

A MULTITUDE throughout Scotland, and far beyond our frontiers, are with us in their thoughts as we gather here to pay our tribute of affection and respect to the memory of a great artist, and to render thanks to the Giver of all good for the gift to our nation of his life and service.

At this hour, when all that is mortal of Robert Lorimer is being committed to the ground at his beloved Fifeshire home, it is appropriate that such a congregation should assemble here. St. Giles' occupied a sacred and especial place in his thoughts and affections. It was not only that he regarded its walls with that filial concern and reverence which every Scotsman feels towards this ancient and historic church, but also that in a very real sense St. Giles' was the

medium through which, at last, in the full maturity of his powers, he came to be recognised as one of the supreme architects of the English-speaking world.

From the hour when, in 1911, and in the presence of the King and of his knights, the Chapel of the Order of the Thistle was dedicated, and opened to the public gaze the rich wonder of its beauties, the name of Robert Lorimer became securely fixed in the annals of the highest architectural achievement of our times. It seemed then, and his subsequent work abundantly justified the hope, that the rays of a forgotten glory of design and craftsmanship in glass and wood and stone had fallen again upon a land whose guardianship of its artistic possessions had often been careless and whose architectural treasures had not infrequently been profaned by callous indifference and wanton destruction.

Indeed, in our generation, when the appreciation of the holiness of beauty, long dimmed in our common life, has again been quickened in the consciousness of Scotsmen, Robert Lorimer seemed one of a chosen few ordained by Providence to meet the appointed hour. All over the land where the desolation of many generations has been restored and the broken walls of Zion have been rebuilt, his name is enshrined in works of splendour and of loveliness.

He was a fervid Scotsman. His patriotism was not, as patriotism so often is, an irrational sense of arrogant superiority, but a deep love of his native land which drove him to seek, after his own fashion and according to the measure of his gifts, to further its reputation in creative art and through the materialisation of lofty conceptions to advance its honour and dignity.

To this end he strove to assemble round him in Edinburgh a group of artists and craftsmen whose work and genius should so shine before men as to constitute in our own generation that which should not suffer by comparison with any period of the past. What his own

reputation owed to them, a brilliant galaxy, he knew full well and did not hesitate to say. The Thistle Chapel and the National War Memorial on the Castle Rock will boldly challenge posterity to give its verdict as to the degree in which his dreams were realised. Of that verdict we need entertain small doubt.

He has passed away before his right hand had lost its cunning or his gifts had felt the encroachment of that decay which eventually invades all human powers. According to our limited and earth-bound ideas his death is premature, and the sadness of farewell must echo through this hour of commemoration. Yet there remains a sense of noble completion which gilds his grave with light.

There comes a time in the life of many great artists when the zenith of achievement has been reached. The accumulation of experiment, labour, and experience, fired into creative force by a supreme flash of genius and revelation for which all else would appear to have been but preparatory, results in that which can never again be wholly attained. We should, however poignant our own sense of loss may be, endeavour to realise that life has not ill-used a man who in God's providence is permitted to leave the world's stage in the hour of this triumphant attainment.

Robert Lorimer had reached the climax of his work when the National War Memorial was opened in honour of Scotland's gallant dead. Hereafter, as men look on that superb creation, the words *Nunc dimittis, Domine*, will be associated in their thoughts with the name of him in whose imagination it was born.

"After life's fitful fever, he sleeps well." By his labours he has given to our nation, and through our nation to the wide earth, many a poem in wood and stone which will continue to impress on the minds of men the sense of another and a greater world which surrounds us, and which will lift the thoughts of

generations yet unborn to that House of God not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

Night dreams of day ; and winter seems
In sleep to breathe the balm of May.
Their dreams are true anon : but they,
The dreamers, then themselves are dreams.

Thus, while our days the dreams renew
Of some forgotten sleeper, we,
The dreamers of futurity,
Shall vanish when our own are true.

So the workmen die. The dreamers pass away.
But the dreams, the vision, and the work remain.
The dust must return to the earth, but the spirit shall
return to God who gave it.

A CHRISTMAS SERMON

*Preached in St. Giles' Cathedral, Sunday Evening,
25th December 1927*

Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass.—*St. Luke ii. 15.*

I

IN its deepest sense, my brethren, and in sincere affection and goodwill, I wish you again, as I did this morning, "A Happy Christmas!" May the joy of this holy season bring with it to each one of you that peace which the world cannot give nor take away!

There is no time of the year which means so much to men as this. Its glamour and its charm invest our earliest memories, and as the years pass on, though the emotions associated with it may change, its meaning grows deeper and its message is more wonderful. As we grow older it would seem inevitable that our attitude to this festival should alter, for we no longer speak as a child, understand as a child, and think as a child; but it does not really alter so much. So far as Christmas is concerned, the old grow young again, and the young grow never old. The spirit of the season remains fundamentally the same, and its sweet joy returns undimmed. With the dawn of Christmas Day it seems as if a burden rolls off the back of humanity. In our hearts there rises like a fountain a spontaneous burst of charity and goodwill. It is a great thing, as Washington Irving observed, to have one day in the year, at least, when we are sure of being welcome wherever we go, and have, as it were, the world all thrown open to us. For a while the fret and fever of

life are forgotten and once again we experience the childlike heart. Thomas Hardy, in his poem "The Oxen," very movingly expresses this fact. He calls to mind how, when he was very young, someone told him on Christmas Eve how on the stroke of midnight the cattle everywhere fell on their knees.

So fair a fancy few would weave
In these years ! Yet, I feel,
If someone said on Christmas Eve,
" Come ; see the oxen kneel

In the lonely barton by yonder coomb
Our childhood used to know,"
I should go with him in the gloom,
Hoping it might be so.

The influence of the Babe in the manger permeates our thoughts and feelings, and the whole world is somehow brought a little nearer to the heart of God. The Christmas peace falls upon our restless lives. It is incommunicable but real. The echoes of the angels' song awaken reanswering echoes in our souls. We know with a thrilling certainty that in a lonely Syrian stable life and immortality are brought to light. Through the tender mercy of our God the dayspring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

There are moments in human life when phrase and metaphor are useless and language at its best is but an empty sound. We experience such a moment when we stand by the manger in the company of the shepherds and the Blessed Mother. But if our lips are dumb, our hearts are not. The wistful beauty of that scene at Bethlehem has for two thousand years awed humanity into the silence of loving adoration. Yet while it lays a stillness on the tongue, it opens the floodgates of the soul. And to-day with humble, grateful, and penitent

hearts we lift our eyes to the cloven heavens and cry from the very depths of our being our answer to the message of the angels : "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

II

The thought of universal Christendom at this hour is concentrated on the birth of Jesus Christ. Throughout the whole earth men and women of divers colours, races, and languages are standing in rapt adoration before the Child in the manger. The event which nineteen centuries ago was attended by Eastern shepherds hastening to a stable at the village tavern of Bethlehem in Judæa is the same which to-day thrills with its perennial appeal the imagination of the Christian world. The birth of an obscure Jewish peasant maiden's child, of which a company of herdsmen were made aware beneath the stars on a Syrian hillside, is now proclaimed around the globe, over continent and island, by pealing bells, by choirs innumerable, by exultant greetings in a hundred million homes. Indeed, the most significant and incredible fact in history is that this helpless Infant lying amid scenes of squalid Oriental poverty on the breast of a country girl from Galilee should have re-directed the whole current of the world's affairs and laid a spell upon the human race.

There is none who is not wholly bereft of imagination, to say nothing of intelligence, who is not moved to profound and reverent wonder by that Child in the manger and His subsequent influence upon mankind. To the shepherds, the sight they witnessed was nothing out of the common. There, amid the murky gloom of a wayside stable, was a Galilean carpenter and his espoused wife with a new-born child swaddled in the garments of the poor and cradled in the straw of a manger because there was no room for them in the inn. But for us the scene at Bethlehem is very different, for

we know, as the shepherds did not, the end of that marvellous story. We can follow the Child through the years of adolescence as He grew in wisdom, and in stature, and in favour with God and man. We can see Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions, while all they that heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers. We can stand on the banks of the Jordan and see the waters of baptism descend upon His head. We can go with Him as He moves among men, healing, teaching, helping, blessing, while the publicans and sinners drew near for to hear Him. We can company with Him in the wilderness of temptation and in the garden at Gethsemane, and with the people stand beholding around the cross on Golgotha. Before our eyes the pageantry of history passes across the stage of the vanished centuries—the boast of heraldry, the pomp of power, the heroes and the kings, the poets and the preachers, the prophets and the saints. Yet all are reduced to virtual insignificance before the character and achievement and spiritual majesty of Him who had for His cradle the oxen's stall.

Join all the glorious names
Of wisdom, love, and power
That ever mortals knew,
That angels ever bore ;
All are too mean to speak His worth,
Too mean to set our Saviour forth.

What were the circumstances of His life ? Thus was He born among the beasts of the field, and at the last He was numbered by His generation with the transgressors and His grave was with the wicked. His comparatively few years He spent in poverty and inward loneliness. His motives were consistently misconstrued and His purposes misunderstood and falsified. He gathered about Him a handful of curiously-assorted people who, mesmerised by His moral and spiritual

greatness, were for a while prepared to share His brief periods of popularity and His prolonged periods of social ostracism, but who at the supreme crisis of His life to a man forsook Him and fled. He was despised and rejected, snubbed and humiliated by the upper classes, and thwarted and intrigued against by the leaders of His Church and State. For a while He was popular with the mob, who sought to use Him for their own ends, but who, when they found Him to be neither a political trickster nor a seditious demagogue and His message of God's love to be disconcerting to their base ambitions and desires, cursed Him as a blasphemer and impostor and murdered Him upon a cross. His life went out in darkness and despair. . . .

But was that the end? If we maintain it was, we are forced into an impossible situation as we seek to explain the history of Christendom. Something must have happened after Christ's death whose results cannot carelessly be dismissed as the fruit of hallucination on the part of those who were associated with Him. The cross on which He died, and which, until His quivering flesh was nailed upon it, was a symbol of reproach and shame, now adorns the crowns and sceptres of a large proportion of the kingdoms of the world. A stupendous affirmation of religious faith based upon His truth and with Himself as the object of its worship is embodied in the Universal Church, whose confidence in its Lord is such that it can sing :

Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Does his successive journeys run ;
His kingdom stretch from shore to shore,
Till moons shall wax and wane no more.

To-day around the wide world arises a mighty chorus of thanksgiving from the glad hearts of men as with the shepherds of old they go in their dreams unto Bethlehem to see this thing which has come to pass. Here indeed we ourselves sang this morning concerning the Child in

the manger, "Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ . . . thou sittest at the right hand of God."

What then has happened that from that episode at Bethlehem has come this amazing conviction that that Child is one with the Author and Maker of the Universe? That this conviction could not reasonably have had its origin in His crucifixion is maintained by Christian and agnostic alike. The Christian finds an answer in the Resurrection, the agnostic has to find one somewhere and postulates hysterical self-delusion on the part of His friends. Will you, my brother, who are perhaps a little contemptuous of what you are accustomed to think of as orthodox Christianity, and you also, my brother, who are perhaps so conventional a Christian that you have never really thought about it at all, ponder afresh in honesty and reverence this question which is above all questions :

Who is He, in yonder stall,
At whose feet the shepherds fall ?

III

There is an urgent necessity for us to face this question squarely. We cannot return too frequently to its examination. The Christian faith is in some danger of being watered down to a mere ethical system of general well-doing and benevolence derived from Jesus of Nazareth and the splendour of His moral character. The average churchgoer nowadays is impatient of "doctrinal" sermons, with the result that the pulpit tends more and more to "practical" discourses and the man in the pew becomes increasingly ignorant of the faith he professes. The very difficult and somewhat chaotic conditions of our modern life, the disintegrated and often rudderless character of society, and the breaking down of many traditions, restraints, and sanctions, are causing many people in their anxiety to consolidate

a wandering humanity round some recognised moral ideal to emphasise alone in Christian teaching the personal example of Jesus. A large library of popular modern theology has grown up round the Jesus of history, who is stressed as the embodiment of human perfection. Men of goodwill are called to give a more honest allegiance to this the highest and noblest character who ever lived. It is further implied that, if we can but identify our wills and purposes with God, as He did, we can rise to be what He was and thereby establish the Kingdom on the earth.

All this is partly true. It is one aspect of the Christian gospel, but it is not the whole truth. It is an entirely inadequate statement of the general content of the New Testament. The pages written by those who lived in Christ's times, who knew Him personally, and who therefore may be relied upon to have had a more or less accurate insight into His mind and spirit, are consistently unanimous in their suggestion that to them He embodied something much greater than what is implied by the modern cult of the Jesus of history. They regarded Him indeed as their friend ; but in their recognition of His spiritual greatness, of an august remoteness of soul, there is definite evidence that they conceived Him to be united with God in a unique personal relationship which is not properly or historically explained in terms of moral superiority.

It is indeed doubtful whether Christ's name and influence would have survived His own generation had His sole contribution to the world been merely that of moral example. Unitarianism, it has been said, may live within Christianity, but it could not live without it. We do right to stress our Lord's humanity, and indeed the present tendency to stress it at the expense of His divinity is a not unnatural reaction against the older theology which stressed His divinity at the expense of His humanity. But the mere human Jesus does not suffice. It does not satisfy our hearts nor does it square

with history. In that most convincing book, *Belief in Christ*, Bishop Gore has in this connection strongly emphasised the limitations of the influence of mere example. It rests, as he observes, largely on similarity of conditions. A man in a slum garret is not greatly impressed when you tell him to follow the example of a millionaire. Anything that suggests a marked difference of conditions between the circumstances of the object of our admiration and ourselves inevitably weakens its appeal. Difference of race also, and remoteness of time, as the Bishop says, destroy its force. The average man of our own day, for instance, is not deeply moved by the physical endurance of the Stoics. The results of the death of Jesus compared with those of the death of Socrates are surely such as to warrant the assumption that there is something in connection with the former which was not associated with the latter.

No, speaking for myself, I need more than the personal example of even a perfect man living two thousand years ago in distant Syria under social, political, and religious conditions utterly dissimilar to those in which my own lot is cast. Such indeed might move me to reverent sympathy, admiration, and a desire to emulate a character so far above my own, emotions which are experienced in the reading of all noble biography; but it would not move me to say, "Jesus, I will trust thee—trust thee with my soul!" In those hours of battle against the world, the flesh, and the devil, which we all of us know too well, in the day when the winds rise and the storms beat on the citadel of the soul, the foundation on which I at least can only find my moral and spiritual security is a faith in One who, though He died on the cross, is alive for evermore, and with whom I have still to do.

True it is indeed that He left us an example that we should follow in His steps. It was the example of glorious manhood. It was the revelation that human

life, however broken and beaten and battered by circumstances, was well worth the living if lived in His spirit. Poor Pilate spoke truer than he knew when he cried, "Behold the man!" He was the man, full and complete, subject to the physical and intellectual limitations of humanity, tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. He was the way, the truth, and the life. But for all that—and again I would refer you for emphasis to Dr. Gore's conclusions—in the days of His flesh what did His mere personal example achieve? It was not effective even upon the lives of His own immediate and intimate circle. The failure of His disciples to enter into His ideals, to understand His point of view, and to live in the atmosphere of His great and loving heart, was a constant disappointment to Him. Their utter incapacity to learn "what spirit they were of" vexed and tried Him sorely. In His last hours on earth their attitude of mind was completely alien to His own. The scene which took place in the upper chamber at Jerusalem when, in order to teach them humility, He was compelled Himself to wash their feet, was thoroughly discreditable. They had been squabbling as to who should have the highest places in His kingdom, and their tempers were such that even on that the night of their Master's betrayal they could not realise what service and brotherhood meant, a fact which must have stabbed Him as cruelly as the kiss of Judas or the denial of Peter. The following day in the hour of His death they deserted Him and left Him hanging on His cross.

But a few days later we find them completely recreated. As I observed earlier, something had happened, let men explain it as they will. The cowards had become heroes and the holden eyes were aglow with the light of revelation. They found now that they could follow Him, emulate His example, and attain to His standards. And why? What was the reason, if it was other than the reason the New Testament

documents maintain? Because they were convinced that He now lived in them in His risen life, loving, strengthening, and directing them. They became new creatures, not because He had set them an example and was dead, but because He was alive, and lived in them and they in Him.

IV

Now, look backward to His cross. Consider it impartially in the light of subsequent history. It cannot be that His death on Calvary was the end of Him whose birth we celebrate to-day. Because we see issuing from the grave in the garden of Joseph of Arimathæa a light that never was on sea or land. From that sepulchre we witness those same men and women who had misunderstood Him, denied and deserted Him, hastening all over the civilised world, breathless, exultant in conviction, proclaiming everywhere they went a truth that seemed incredible. They said that Jesus, whom men had crucified, had come back alive from the dead. If this be the result, as Renan thought, of an attack of hysterics on the part of Mary Magdalene, we are in the presence of a miracle compared to which the Resurrection is insignificant. Along the shores of the Mediterranean, to Greece, to Rome, to Asia, to Egypt, the strange bewildering story spread. There was no stopping it. Neither persecution, nor imprisonment, nor contempt, nor death itself could stop it. Jesus Christ was alive!

We have further to reckon with another fact which is attested by history. It is that wherever this story gained acceptance society was quickened to a new life. Those who had never seen Him declared that they found themselves in close and real relationship with His personality. They maintained that the living Christ was a part of their own inward experience. They found in Him a power that simply changed their lives and made them, and all things, new. They discovered in Him one who

in unique measure could soothe their sorrows, dry their tears, satisfy their highest aspirations, and make His strength perfect in their weakness. More and more, as the good news spread, men of every race and clime turned their eyes eastward to Jerusalem and asked with awestruck mind and bated breath :

“ Who is He that from the grave
Comes to heal and help and save ? ”

And more and more as that question passed from lip to lip the glad conviction rose in human hearts that He was indeed God's perfect witness to Himself. Before three centuries had passed, this faith had raised the Catholic Church on the ruins of the Empire of the Caesars.

v

“ It is surely a most significant thing,” says Principal Cairns, “ that . . . the greatest philosophies, whether in India, in Greece, or in Germany, seek to shew that the true explanation of Nature is not found in herself at all, that she, with all her glory and beauty and terror and pain, is an apparent and transient life, and that the true home and abiding reality of the things of beauty and love is behind and above her in the unseen.” This essential idea underlies the faith of Christendom and finds true and wonderful expression in what this day has come to pass at Bethlehem. Beyond the things we see and know, there lives a personal Creator who through all His manifold works is fulfilling a good and righteous purpose. That purpose He has sought to reveal through nature and through history, and it is manifest in every event and happening, though naturally in some more than in others. Its perfect expression is in the incarnation of Himself in Jesus Christ. “ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . All things were made by Him ; and without Him was not any thing made that

was made. . . . And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth."

As we repair to the manger we are witnesses of no isolated and accidental miracle breaking through the continuity of a uniform process. We see the normal culmination of the whole work of revelation and the great heart of God supremely revealing itself in man, the noblest of His created things. There in the helplessness of human infancy lies the love of God towards His children. Through the Incarnation, Christianity is segregated from all other forms of religious faith. Each and all of them constitute the groping of man in the search for his Creator. Christianity in the Incarnation is the yearning search of the Creator for those creatures He has made in His likeness, and for fellowship with Himself.

God was in Christ, reconciling not Himself to the world, but the world to Himself. The essence of the Christian gospel is its revelation of a searching, seeking, loving Creator. And the search was not ended when the journey from the manger ended on the cross. Still He lives and moves among men, "warm, sweet, tender, even yet." Still from their follies and vanities and sins He calls men to Himself, telling of that new and glad-some birth which Christmas symbolises and which is found alone in Him. Still He points to the way of life He shewed them, and assures them that, if they live in Him, His blessedness may be theirs also.

VI

Now you may be thinking that I have strayed far away from the theme of a Christmas sermon, but I would assure you that there is a profound significance in this linking up of Christmas Day with the events of Calvary and the Empty Tomb. The Manger at

Bethlehem, the Cross on the "green hill far away," and the Sepulchre in the Garden, are inseparable, for the two latter are the complement of the first and the initial act cannot be judged till the play itself be done. As in the physical world life comes out of death—"that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die"—so in the life of the spirit men must die unto themselves if they are to live unto God.

There is surely no need for me to emphasise to you that this Christmas brings with it much uneasiness and depression. To every thoughtful mind, to every heart that is not cold as steel, to every conscience that is not wholly narcotised, the angels' songs of peace and goodwill are sounding over a world where conditions are prevalent which are a lamentable reflection upon a civilisation which names the name of the Holy Child. Aristotle observed that we are apt to blame systems of government for many evils whose real cause lies in the darkness of the human heart; and indeed it is easy enough for each section of society to attribute to others the responsibility for the curse of all the hardships, wrongs, injustice, and antagonisms which to-day hang like a stifling poison-cloud above the masses of mankind. But this season when the Christ-child lies in the manger at Bethlehem is a time when the honest cannot deceive themselves. No decent man or woman can act the hypocrite in the presence of children, and the Child in the stable is like none other. We know that the roots of our distresses lie far deeper than in industrial economics or international diplomacy. They lie in the subterranean depths of man's profanation of his human nature which was made in the image of his God. Selfishness and the cruelty that it breeds are the fundamental causes of the world's woes.

"They laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for Him in the inn." Read again that old story when you go home, and, if you have any imagination at all, you will pause instinctively when you reach that

verse, the book will slip down on to your knees, and you will become very thoughtful. No room for Him in the inn ! Has it not always been the same these last two thousand years ? The Holy Child is still an out-cast from so much in the life of this world He came to love and save. He has been pushed out of politics, out of diplomacy, out of ecclesiasticism, out of everything. There has been no room for Him, and as men have scrambled for power and place the Child has been the first to be expelled in order to relieve the fierce congestion. There is a hymn which recounts the loneliness and exile of the Son of Mary on the earth, and which ends with the refrain :

O, come to my heart, Lord Jesus,
There is room in my heart for thee.

Is there ? Let us frankly review our lives this Christmas evening. How far are we disposed to minister rather than to be ministered unto ? What is our attitude towards our neighbours ? What do we do to relieve the afflictions and distresses of our brethren ? How do we regard our human responsibilities, our daily duties, the sacred trust of our worldly possessions ? How do we act, think, and speak, and what are our standards of honesty, charity, justice, generosity, goodness, truth ? Can we sincerely hope that the world is a little better and a little happier because we live in it ? Is there room for Him in the inn ?

VII

If room is to be made for Him, if at this Christmastide we are to enter into that new life which through this wondrous birth has been brought to light, the divine influence of this blessed day must remain with us not as a mere pious memory but as a vital inspiration. There is so much that we must leave behind us, dead and buried, as from the manger we go forth to the

noise and tumult of life again. We all have the rags of soiled garments, torn and bespattered by the world, to leave behind us as we return from Bethlehem. There are those false judgments, and envies, and personal dislikes and animosities which do so much to embitter life and to make ourselves and other people unhappy. There is vanity, and meanness, and egotism to be left behind there, and that tendency to become hard and selfish to which many of us fall victim as we grow older. There are so many ambitions we cherish, so many selfish and unkind plans we have been making, which the eyes of the Holy Child rebuke and put to shame.

And there are other things too that we can leave behind us at the manger. The burden of toil, anxiety, care, and sorrow can be laid down there. The weary can find rest and the lonely a friend. The afflicted can find consolation and the happy a deeper and a purer joy. This surely applies to us all, for to-day we have doubtless come to Bethlehem with very varied emotions. Some of us have come crowned with joy, and some are anxious and worried, and others are very tired and very sad. And some have a heavier burden still in the shape of memories of which they are deeply ashamed. Nevertheless, whatever the secrets of our hearts may be, we know that here we are in the presence of the love of Him who made us, in which the most darkened life can lift its head in confidence and with new faith begin once more. It is indeed because He died for us that to-day we can worship at His cradle. This is a difficult world in which we live, but it would surely be intolerable were it not that amid its injustice, pain, and cruelty we can see the very love of God itself stretched martyred on the cross, and can remember that He had fellowship with us in our sufferings.

The problem of evil and of suffering is a big one. There is no adequate solution for the afflictions of the best and purest spirits and the pleasure and profit which so frequently fall to those who least deserve them, unless

we can find our faith in the goodness of the ultimate purposes of God through Him who, though He did no wrong, was crucified of men. It is because beyond the manger there is a cross, and beyond the cross an empty grave, that we can have confidence that some day and somewhere we will find that those who, brave with His spirit, have been courageous under loss, patient under suffering, and faithful unto death, have indeed found in Him the way that leadeth unto life.

As I look on that little Child to-day in the arms of the Blessed Mother and contemplate the gracious and beautiful story of His earthly life, were I to believe that the end of it was to be His death upon the cross I would not enter this pulpit again. It would be idle to do so, for I would have no message to give you. It would mean that all the pain and blood and sweat and tragedy of this world, its moral degradation and its moral heroism, its sacrifice and selfishness, its beauty and its horror, its lust and its loveliness, its sinners and its saints, found their final expression in a skull and cross-bones. If we are adequately to rejoice at His cradle we need the last chapter to complete the tale. And the last word in the story of that Child whom now we see at Bethlehem was not when He cried, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken Me?"—it was when some weeping women bringing spices to His grave suddenly knew that He was not there, and heard in their souls the message, "He is risen as He said."

VIII

Many waters cannot quench love, nor can the floods drown it. Nor did the river of death annihilate the Saviour. He was born for us that He should nevermore be separated from us, and He lives and still is ours. Near to us in all the trials and perplexities of our human lot, in the shadows of our own Gethsemanes, and in the Calvarys of mortal life, is He who bore our

griefs and carried our sorrows. Many of you, I know, have need of that thought at this season when so many scattered families are reunited, since for you this glad circle is already broken. For numberless homes this Christmas is filled with wistful memories. There is a vacant chair. A beloved face is no more seen. A voice once dear is silent now.

Do not, I beseech you, allow the clouds of this mortal life to dim for you the radiant prophecy of Christmas-tide. The annual reunion in the old home is but the type of an eternal reunion where the Old Year fades no more into the New, for time like a dream shall have passed away and the shadows of its separations shall no more darken the fellowship of those who dwell in light. Our earthly homes, broken it may be for a little while by death, are but the symbols of that blessed home where those we love await us. We do not forget them, and I am sure that they do not forget us. The fellowship of the living with the dead raises its own problems, for we would not like to think of them as suffering pain, and yet we cannot believe that if they see us as we really are they can be truly happy. But we can at least remember that they look upon us

With larger, other eyes than ours,
To make allowance for us all.

And though many of you this Christmas may shed your secret tear, through the mists a vision of the angels gleams and the star is still shining in the east.

So as another Christmas comes and goes we shall find, if we seek, in its all too swiftly passing hours the secret of the indwelling peace, and thus we will go into the New Year that awaits us with faith and hope and courage. The years are passing, and each one is bringing us nearer to the great solution of all mysteries. Some day for each one of us the light will grow more clear beyond the Christmas star, the songs of the angels will swell louder and more near, and in their music

the voices of the world will be hushed to rest. It is the Child in the manger before whom we now kneel in adoration here in time who is the revelation of that love of God which will surround and bless and lead us still hereafter in eternity, and whose dominion in this and in whatever world our souls may penetrate must for ever continue to endure.

ADDRESS AT THE MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR
FIELD-MARSHAL THE EARL HAIG OF
BEMERSYDE, K.T.

St. Giles' Cathedral, 3rd February 1928

[The ageworn walls of St. Giles' have looked on many strange and varied scenes, but surely never on aught more august and impressive than those which attended the lying-in-state of the late Field-Marshal Earl Haig of Bemersyde. Nothing like it has been seen in Edinburgh since 1570, when John Knox preached in St. Giles' at the funeral service of the Regent Moray.

It was our high privilege to shelter and keep vigil by all that was mortal of Lord Haig from the arrival of the coffin from London at midnight on Friday, 3rd February 1928, until the departure of the funeral cortege from St. Giles' for Dryburgh Abbey on Tuesday, 7th February. During that time some ninety thousand people passed before the catafalque. A distinguished military officer, a friend and contemporary of the dead Field-Marshal, writing at the time to the Minister, said : " There has passed from us one greater than Wellington, and who truly exemplified the Scottish character. Which makes one proud and thankful that Scottish soil is to receive his dust, and not the crypt of St. Paul's Cathedral."

At the hour of midnight they brought him to St. Giles', and from the darkness the great church received him to its heart. None who witnessed that solemn and eerie scene, when from amid the vast and silent crowds without they bore him through the portals of the dim-lit Cathedral to rest and sanctuary, will ever forget its pathos and its moving beauty. It was an ex-service man, standing by the steps of the West Door, who, shortly before the cavalcade, headed by the ghost-like squadrons of the Scots Greys, came down the Lawnmarket with the gleam of white horses and the glint of sabres beneath the watching stars, expressed in simple words the secret why in the capital of Scotland this warrior coming home to his native land to seek his last resting-place was being received with a spontaneous manifestation of love and sympathy which had never before been witnessed in our history. " When-

ever he made promises to us," he said with a choke in his voice, "he always kept his word."

The following is the address delivered at the Memorial Service held in St. Giles' on 3rd February 1928, at the same hour as the service in Westminster Abbey.]

It would be hard to find a parallel to that widespread sense of loss which to-day fills the heart of every son and daughter of our race and binds our far-flung Empire in an act of reverent homage. At this hour there is something deeper in our thoughts than that wistful sadness and melancholy recognition of the transitoriness of human pomp and power which accompany the passing of the great ones of the earth. There is common to each one of us a very real and unaffected sense of profound and personal sorrow.

We have gathered to this memorial service not as remote and dissociated spectators of a great man's obsequies. We are as those who stand by the death-bed of a friend. That simple-minded gentleman, whose earthly career of high achievement has in the mysterious providence of God been brought to so sudden a close, possessed in a unique degree the affection of the people of our country. From them he seemed divided by no barriers of rank, distinction, or renown. He was in a peculiar sense their very own.

Douglas Haig was more than the commander of an empire's victorious armies, and more than the military leader on whom we placed our trust in the supreme crisis of our national and imperial history. He was an asset to the British Empire of a worth beyond all price because of a nobility of character and idealism which exerted an incalculable influence upon his generation. Simple and unaffected goodness cannot be hid, and our people exalted him to the pinnacle of hero-worship not alone as their deliverer, but because they saw revealed in him a wealth of moral and spiritual qualities which cast a spell upon the nation's soul. Our Empire mourns his loss with a universal sorrow, remembering as well

as the greatness of his deeds the inward greatness of the man himself. Stainless in his honour, unimpeachable in his integrity, selfless in his devotion, he walked among men with a perfect heart, an ornament of the knights of God.

His career was one of brilliance and renown. Yet increasing fame seemed to bring to him an ever-increasing sense of responsibility. Popularity only deepened the extraordinary humility of his heart. Those intimately associated with him proclaim with unanimous testimony that Douglas Haig never put himself forward or sought his own ends. With a single-minded earnestness he pursued the path of duty and consecrated his strength and gifts to disinterested service of his country.

It is significant of his character that in the peace which has followed the warfare of the nations, to the termination of which international agony he so greatly contributed, while others with voice and pen have rushed to blazon forth what of inside knowledge they possessed concerning the conduct of affairs throughout those grim and anguished years, with quiet dignity he stood aloof, and opened not his mouth either to praise or to blame. The purity and repute of our public life would have been better served if, like him, others had resolved to seal their lips for a space of years. But it was not in accordance with his nature to contribute to controversy and acrimonious criticism calculated to open wounds and embitter feelings.

To-day the wells of memory are stirred !

We are transported back to those tortured days in which amid the fury and convulsion of the belligerent nations he stood erect, a strong undaunted figure, upon the world's disordered stage. Into any appreciation of the burden of weariness and anxiety that he bore with level eyes and unflinching courage not one of us can dimly enter. Yet here and now we humbly own our gratitude for all he was to us, and all he did, who

endured on our behalf what we are powerless to estimate or comprehend. Nor do we forget how the cessation of the conflict found him a passionate advocate of peace and goodwill among men, the greatest captain of his age calling upon the peoples of the earth "to sound the Truce of God to the whole world for ever."

Never has a military commander so loved and remembered the rank and file who with him bore the heat and burden of the day. To the end he laboured for their good, suffering in their sufferings, and in their afflictions himself afflicted. And if we honour his memory, if our mourning for his passing be deeper than a transient emotion, and rooted in reverence, gratitude, and affection, let us see to it that the cause of his erstwhile comrades-in-arms to which he gave his strength will never lack support or pass into forgetfulness.

The strife is o'er, the conflict done. The victor has gone home where

After battle cometh rest ;
After noise, tranquillity.

As one who answers to his Master's call, swiftly and quietly he went, without pain and spared the sadness of farewell. "So he passed over, and all the trumpets sounded for him on the other side." This brave and rugged land which gave him birth now waits with loving welcome to receive his dust into its dear embrace.

Patriot and noble warrior, take then thy rest ! Noblest wert thou in the faithful service of thy God. Thy warfare is accomplished. The powers of death have done their worst, but thy immortality remains secure. Amid the calm eternities of God, and in the glad fellowship of the strong battalions of those whom thou didst lead in battle and who by the path of sacrifice won triumphant to their shining peace, the hopes which sustained thee here now know fruition, and thy simple faith is lost in sight !

A BALMORAL SERMON

Preached in Crathie Parish Church, Sunday Morning, 26th August 1928,¹ His Majesty the King and T.R.H. the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Gloucester being present.

And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast :

The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus.—*St. John xii. 20, 21.*

I

THIS story is a well-worn pulpit theme, but, since human needs change but little, its lesson and suggestiveness remain perennially fresh. The Passover was at hand, and the curtain was about to rise on the final act in the drama of the life of our Lord. Along the dusty roads of Palestine the caravans and companies of pilgrims were wending their way towards the Holy City in anticipation of the Feast. And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at that time ; the same, when they had reached Jerusalem, came to Philip and desired him, saying, “ Sir, we would see Jesus.”

These were proselytes. They were Gentile by birth but in religion were members of the Jewish Church. We may assume that they were men of earnest and speculative mind who, having found no spiritual security in the paganism of their own nation nor yet in the lofty philosophy of its best and clearest thinkers, had em-

¹ The eve of the signing in Paris of the Peace Pact for the Outlawry of War.

braced the theology of the seed of Abraham. The Hebrew faith with its majestic conception of the unity of God had, owing to the large compulsory and voluntary dispersions of the Jews, penetrated the polished circles of the Gentile world and filled many with a vague dissatisfaction, not only with the mythology of a thousand gods and goddesses who, having in themselves no inherent capacity for development, had outlived their influence since their adherents had come to recognise them as their own moral inferiors, but even with the teaching and speculation of such intellects as those of Socrates and Plato. "We must wait," Plato himself had said, "for a man, or a godlike man, who will teach us our religious duties and take away the blindness from our eyes."

There was a ferment, an unrest, abroad. Men were finding the deities of their fathers wholly unable to supply their present spiritual needs. Their hands were groping in the shadows for some more convincing explanation of life, death, and the universe in which they had their being than was contained in phantasy and fable however alluring in their poetic charm. An era of history, now exhausted and bankrupt, was shivering on the verge of collapse. The spiritual foundations of the ancient world had become thoroughly undermined, and society was in real danger of widespread disintegration. Pagan thought had proved itself incapable of controlling the steady decay of morality and religion. A chapter of humanity's strange and chequered story was drawing to its close. The world was growing old, as Gibbon put it, and not even the Caesars could make it young again. The twilight of the gods had come.

Throughout the Gentile regions many had found intellectual escape from a chaos of uncertainty by entering the fellowship of the Jewish Church, whose synagogues from the time of Alexander the Great had been planted in steadily increasing numbers by Jewish

colonists in all the more important cities of the Mediterranean. In its conception of Jehovah, the all-holy and almighty, who by His own mouth confounded their traditional gods as unreal and without being, they found their spiritual longings more adequately satisfied.

II

These Greeks, then, of whom we read had come from their distant homes to the holy city of their adopted faith to participate in the Feast of the Passover, the central rite of Jewish worship, hallowed by the observance of a thousand years. Some, reading the text as "were wont to come up," consider that these men were regular annual visitors to Jerusalem at the Passover; others think they were on their way thither for the first time. Perhaps indeed it was their first pilgrimage, and if so it needs little imagination to appreciate the emotion which would be theirs as they contemplated their entry to the courts of Zion. Their imagination would be fired to exultant enthusiasm when, nearing Jerusalem, their eyes at length beheld its towers and palaces and the gleaming dome of that temple wherein to them was now localised the dwelling-place of the living God. "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God." So would they raise their voices in the marching song of the pilgrims. "Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee. For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand."

As they journeyed they naturally had heard the gossip which centred round the young teacher from Nazareth, who for three years had become increasingly a storm-centre of controversy. Scraps of what He had been saying reached their ears. Parables of His, strangely arresting and provocative, were retold to

them. They heard of His mysterious power of healing, His claim to forgive sins, His assertion that He himself was the way, the truth, and the life, His astounding audacity in having dared to supersede the very laws of Moses. "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time . . . But I say unto you !" This indeed was strange and startling talk. Everyone was speaking of Him, and what was said aroused in these Greeks a growing wonder.

They were not content with mere camp-fire chatter. By nature and disposition they were mentally receptive and prone to intellectual investigation. The reported sayings of this remarkable Galilean awakened answering echoes in their searching souls. They talked, argued, discussed Him among themselves, what He had said, what He had done, how He had shed a new and fuller light on the law and the prophets. But, then, had He ? Was it a new light after all ?

To men of their temperament all this was interesting. Nay, more, it was disquieting. If what had been reported to them concerning the man from Nazareth was more or less accurate, it was very queer speech indeed. Could there be anything in it ? Could it be that the faith of Israel was not so sufficient as they had thought ? Had the last word really been said concerning the things of God, and was there no more to hear, no more to learn ? At anyrate, as they thought about it all they became more and more obsessed by the longing to seek out and see for themselves the Galilean and His friends. And this, Dr. Marcus Dods maintained, was no mere Greek inquisitiveness ; it was the craving of thoughtful men recognising their need of a Redeemer. Perhaps indeed it did go as deep as that. The amazing scenes of which they heard when they reached Jerusalem, Jesus Himself having shortly before entered the city gates amid the hosannas of the populace, drove them to action. And finding Philip, whom from his birth-place, a district largely Hellenic in population, we may

assume to have been familiar with their language, they said unto him, "Sir, we would see Jesus."

III

In these few modest words we hear the sighing aspiration of the ages.

Far and wide, though all unknowing,
Pants for Thee each mortal breast.

Supreme among the sons of men, towering like a sun-kissed Alpine peak above the miasma of the plains, stands the commanding figure of Jesus Christ. Upon Him has been focussed the thought of twenty centuries. Around His cross the succeeding generations have stood beholding. A youth of poor and humble lot, whose destiny it was to be put to death as a criminal amid the execration of His race, by the transcendent beauty and grandeur of His spirit He has compelled the world to acknowledge His tragic defeat and crucifixion as the central fact of human history. Still to this hour the minds of men are riveted on that lonely tortured figure hanging on its cross. Jesus Christ not only continues to demand attention but continues to receive it. He has thrust His way into the heart of human affairs, and is a living force amid the lives of men with whom the politician, the statesman, and the common man, no less than the ecclesiastic, from time to time are forced to reckon. He is too big to ignore, His presence is universal and cannot be escaped. Not only those who love Him, but those who hate Him, have recognised the validity of His promise that He is with men always, even unto the end of the world.

We are driven, each one of us, sooner or later to consider Him and weigh His merits if we are to take any intelligent interest in the world at all. He appears in wholly unexpected places, and becomes involved in every issue. We may accept Him or reject Him, but

we are forced to do the one or the other. From each of us the Figure on the cross asks for a judgment, based not on hearsay but on personal investigation, "What think ye of Christ?" And there is none of us who thinks to any purpose on the greater facts and problems of existence but of very necessity finds himself frequently stepping aside from the throng of life in order to investigate this Man who draws to Himself the attention of the ages with a subtle magnetic power that sways the soul of humanity.

No man wants to remain all his life in the irreflective and irresponsible atmosphere of his early school-days. The instinctive desire of an adolescent is to reach to man's estate, to stand erect at last in the liberty of a rational and responsible being. We all, please God, would like to retain to the end a childlike heart, but we must not be so foolish as to confuse that with a childish mind. Yet we cannot be content to grow merely in stature; we must endeavour to grow also in wisdom and in the exercise of what pertains to the highest faculty which God has given us. To possess a latchkey or to open a bank account of our own for the first time, however thrilling to the young these important events may be, does not surely represent the climax of experience to those created a little lower than the angels. What after all is the true end of all our education? It is not that we may retain in our memory an unsystematised assortment of facts and figures largely irrelevant to our daily life and thought, but that we may have so trained our mind that we shall be able to weigh facts, come to reliable decisions, and estimate values.

The first fact an intelligent human being has to face is the fact of the world and his own presence in it. Where did it come from? Why am I here? Whither am I going? This is a question to which we have to find an answer which will satisfy not only our intelligence but also our hearts, unless we are content to be

classed with the beasts of the field. Is there or is there not an active intelligence behind the universe, a mind, a divine wisdom working out a good and rational purpose through all creation? If there is, then where do I stand in relation to this purpose?—for I must stand somewhere, since I have been called into being. And if I must stand somewhere, then so must all others, and pre-eminently He whom the ages have hailed as unique in history. Where then am I to place Jesus Christ, and where do I place myself in relation to Him?

Though from time to time one comes up against the curious phenomenon of people who have not only looked up into the heavens on a starry night, but have had many hundreds and sometimes several thousands of pounds spent upon their education, yet who are serenely indifferent to any such question, the ordinary man is not so insensible as he would perhaps make himself out to be to the mysteries of the universe in which he lives. Each day that passes brings him up against the greater facts of life. He experiences joy and sorrow, laughter and tears. He sees his friends and intimates fall by his side as he travels on, and he knows that his own turn must come at length. He has his own thoughts about the stars, and the sparrow that falleth to the ground, about the “still, sad music of humanity,” about the enterprises, ambitions, and achievements of mankind poised in such trembling insecurity upon the brink of the grave. He meditates upon these things more frequently than possibly his neighbours imagine, though they all are doing the same, and in the secret places of his heart he recognises that what around him seem the most secure are, in the last resort, but “shadows, not substantial things,” and yearns towards those “that cannot be bought with a price, and that do not die with death.”

IV

“Sir, we would see Jesus.” It is the deepest cry both of the individual and of collective mankind.

All earth's full rivers cannot fill
The sea, that drinking thirsteth still.

So in each human heart there is a craving, an unquenchable longing for it knows not what and which the world can never satisfy. There is something elusive and mysterious outwith our life and surrounding it that haunts us everlastingly and calls to us with a language which is as yet beyond our powers of interpretation. Sometimes it seems as if we are on the point of making sense of it, but then we stumble and become confused. Is it not that within us we bear an immortal soul which pines for its true fatherland amid the eternities of God? “Our dear country,” as the mystics call it. The whole story of the evolution of terrestrial life surely points to a spiritual world which will provide for man an experience which will satisfy the craving of his soul. “We cannot describe the goal of the moral pilgrimage,” says Professor A. E. Taylor, “because we have never reached it ; but the reality of the search involves the reality of the goal.”

The world in which we live has been envisaged by St. Paul as expectant. Creation groaneth in travail, waiting for the revealing of the sons of God. The world process is working to an appointed end and consistently manifests one great divine intention. And, too, the life of man born out of that process is reaching forth to an immortal destiny. Nothing less can satisfy it than the eternal years and the heavenly places. Nothing less can satisfy it than the simple trust, essentially unchanged through all the change and fluctuation of scientific statement and theological emphasis, that that same Power which made the earth and heavens, and set the sun and moon in the firmament to rule over the day

and the night, and formed man of the dust of the ground, also breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life, and he became a living soul.

At times we feel we are about to bridge the gulf which divides the seen from the unseen, the finite from the infinite. For a moment, flashing with bewildering light, we seem to gaze into the glory of uncharted worlds. We all know these moments of spiritual certainty. They come to men in different ways. They come perhaps in the glowing colour of a great canvas, or in the moonlight mysterious on sleeping hills and waters, or in a crash of music, or in a spoken word, or in the laughter of a child, or in the experience of pain, or joy, or tears, or in a cold dead face

Before decay's effacing fingers
Have swept the lines where beauty lingers.

But come to all such moments do. There is a surgent emotion, an incommunicable inward restlessness, a sudden sense of God. The heart leaps with expectation. "We would see Jesus." That is the longing that seizes us with an intensity that is almost more than we can bear. We would see, reach out, clasp and hold fast the great reality which we feel and know is just beyond the trembling veil of sense.

And then the moment passes. The light goes out and the winds of earth blow chill again. The mists come down on the mountain of transfiguration. But we have seen it—the abiding thing beyond the far horizon.

There 's a sunset touch, a fancy from a flower-bell,
Someone's death, a chorus-ending from Euripides—
And that 's enough for fifty hopes and fears
As old and new at once as nature's self.

It is ever the same cry that rises from human hearts to the silences of God. I repeat, men do not live on the surface so much as they pretend. Whenever the

fruits of the world turn bitter to the taste ; whenever the sham and the hypocrisy, the glitter and the frivol, pall in their shoddy unreality ; whenever amid the cares of the business and traffic of life a man pauses in a quiet hour of moral uncertainty to compare his activities with his ideals ; whenever the giddy, the selfish, and the pampered stop for a moment to think about things which will be fresh when their youth has faded and young when the stars are old ; whenever the penitent weeps or the sinner longs for restoration ; whenever the widow sighs in her loneliness or the orphan is bewildered by the world's woe ; whenever in the far country of his shame the prodigal dreams of his father's house—then there goes up the cry to God, " We would see Jesus. We would eat of that bread of which when a man eateth he shall never hunger more ; we would drink of that water of which when a man drinketh he shall never thirst again."

Humanity is not content to be marching to the silence of the grave. It refuses to believe that its destiny is dust and oblivion, and turns defiantly to challenge death. It cannot, and it does not, accept that in the tomb its story finds its ending. Man lifts his eyes to the inscrutable heavens and cries for life—for life where the shadows will have fled away, and where disaster and death will no more play havoc with his love.

V

Those of us who by the nature of our calling hear many strange stories, and are made the recipient of many unhappy secrets, cannot fail to be impressed by the longing for peace of conscience and for restoration of soul that seems to throb in every life. And there are occasions in the experience of everyone when the tired heart turns for help to God.

We live in a very difficult and perplexing world, and we all get knocked about a bit. Things do not turn

out as we expect them to do. Disappointment enters into most people's lives, and not many see their dreams become reality. But most of us learn, thank God, that the only way out of the valley of human experience is not round it but through it, and try to acquire the faith and courage to keep our heads erect. There are some, however, who regardless of warnings seem to think that from the problems of life which have vexed and fretted other people there is always an escape by a back door if only you know where to find it. There is no pathway which can circumvent life's inevitable discipline. Those who seek one, however long they explore and however far they travel, find that in the end all roads lead them back to where they started. The refusal to face the deeper problems of experience, the disinclination to dwell upon or consider its shadowed aspects or to endeavour to safeguard the future by a wise and sober anticipation of its many possibilities, is not light-heartedness but light-headedness.

Life is real, as Longfellow reminds us, and life is earnest. We have got to get through with it, and most of us would like to do so with honour and with dignity, leaving behind us some rough places made smooth that others coming after us may fare the better. At some point in the journey we find that we cannot do it alone. Earthly supports at their strongest and their best prove but very unreliable. Visions fade away, hearts become estranged, and for many love grows cold. Things in which we trusted fail us, people in whom we placed our confidence show an utterly unsuspected side of their character and let us down. None can wholly escape from disillusionment. Our transgressions invade our life with their tragic consequences. The friends whom we love, in whom we find our happiness and security—and in the nature of things these cannot be very many—go from us sooner or later and we are left with but memories and a grave.

“We would see Jesus” is the cry of many a heart,

baffled and tired and disappointed, that could not even tell you what it seeks, but is in reality blindly groping for some guarantee amid the ebb and flow of passing earthly things that all is well and will be well in life and in death. Still to the Galilean they come, as did the Greeks, from the north and the south, from the east and the west, believing that somehow in Him alone the weary can find peace. The experience of men has proved it to be true that those who travel in His company and humbly seek to learn of His mind and spirit can and do find that waters break out in the wilderness and streams in the desert, yes, that even in the darkest places of defeat and anguish and despair there can be found the secret of His courage and His love.

“I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.” Thus He had the faith to speak even in the shadow of His cross. And the answer of humanity has been, “We would see Jesus.” His strength and sympathy, His love and moral beauty, lie like a spell across the pages of history. In the shadow of His cross the sons of men still find their shield and hiding-place, and in the light of His resurrection glory they lay hold upon the life eternal.

VI

To-day, with an inquisitive eagerness which has seldom been surpassed since He lived upon the earth, the eyes of the thinking world are turned to Jesus Christ. His gospel is being submitted to a searching reinvestigation, not only from critical curiosity but because men are becoming more and more convinced that if there they cannot find the way of life they will find it nowhere else. Civilisation has gone wrong, and the world knows it only too well. Amid the discredited leaders of mankind there remains the Galilean, His authority alone unimpaired. Can He and His gospel actually be of help to us? Is He really true, and is

He reliable? That is what a multitude are asking to-day, and they desperately want to know. The words which a disciple spoke to Christ two thousand years ago are ringing down the corridors of history with a new insistence, "Lord, all men seek for thee."

The spiritual and intellectual perturbation of our times has as one of its many causes a terror of the future. Society, which is riddled with materialism, is with good reason uneasily suspicious that all is not well with it, and, having had grim evidence in these latter years that the structure of civilisation cannot indefinitely resist the undermining of human folly, is anxiously groping for security. It is not certain where it can be found, but Jesus Christ is forcing our chaotic age to listen to Him. And every man of right intentions who feels that things are not what they ought to be and who wants to make them better, yes, and all the turbulent masses, haunted with their dreams of a nobler social order and feverishly pursuing their dim ideals with frequently mis-directed zeal, are unconsciously echoing that cry from far-off Palestine, "We would see Jesus."

The rediscovery of the mind of Christ on which the modern world consciously or unconsciously is bent, must, if resolutely carried on, inevitably have far-reaching results. In every era when civilisation has attempted to readjust itself towards a closer approximation to His standards, it has been faced with the inevitable necessity of sacrifice. Much has had to be discarded the loss of which was viewed by many with regret. It cannot be otherwise with us. And signs are not wanting that in its attempt to recover from the recent world catastrophe society has already begun to throw overboard much of its traditional cargo, and this not always with discrimination. The danger of such impulsive action is that through excitement, fear, or sentimentalism, men will thoughtlessly fling away things that had better be retained. We must indeed be careful about that, and not be led into ill-considered and hasty

acts however well-intentioned. The ballast of a ship is a commodity with which it is dangerous to play tricks.

The world has faced periods of transition before now—indeed, every era is one of transition—and will face them again long after our own struggles are forgotten. The future is with God, and if we be true in our generation we need not face it with anything but hope and confidence. With that conviction in his heart Edwin Arnold had faith to say, "What will come, and must come, will come well." The contribution which the individual Christian is called upon to make is obvious. It is by personal example and witness to Christ in life, and thought, and speech to attract more followers to Him, who will be determined to make Him and all He stood for the absolute standard of conduct, whatever be the cost.

In Jesus Christ, it is our faith, there has been revealed the glory of the invisible God and the express image of His person, and His power no selfish dominion has been able to resist for long. Without Him, said Phillips Brooks, moral life becomes a mere barren expediency, social life a hollow shell, emotional life a meaningless excitement, intellectual life an idle play or a stupid drudgery. Without Him, certainly, the world is purposeless, death a terror, and eternity a blank.

VII

It is not surprising that the unhappy experiences of our own generation should have compelled all sorts of people to a new and reverent inquiry concerning the mind and message of our Lord. It has been brought home to the world, and at a bitter cost, that the emphasis which He laid upon the obligations towards their neighbours that bind the nations no less than individuals can only be ignored at the price of unrelieved moral and economic catastrophe. The European War saw Western civilisation dragged to the brink of destruc-

tion, and we know well enough what a repetition of such an outrage on society would entail.

The conscience of humanity has been thoroughly shocked. It is universally admitted that the first problem of modern statesmanship is the problem of peace. We cannot reconcile a Christendom composed of a company of nations armed to the teeth, and glaring at each other across their respective frontiers, with the discipleship of Him whose advent on this earth was heralded with songs of goodwill towards men. There is manifest everywhere the rising tide of a determined will to peace. It is increasingly recognised that to settle our disputes by slaughtering our fellow-men is not creditable to those created in the image of God, and that it is only good and becoming for such to dwell together in unity and concord.

To-morrow, in Paris, the Great Powers will meet to sign the Peace Treaty for the Outlawry of War. They will pledge their word to an agreement which is the furthest advance yet made in the history of pacific international relations. The signing of a pact for the renunciation of war as an instrument of national policy is an occasion of momentous significance which must be hailed with thankfulness by all Christian people. In gratitude we humbly own the guidance of the Holy Spirit which, moving in men's hearts, has led us to this hour. Into the hands of the nations is being placed an opportunity which, if bravely and faithfully utilised, will open up new and radiant perspectives to the eyes of mankind.

Yet, let us not forget that we are not at the end but at the beginning of a mighty task. To rid this earth of the fear and curse of war is the greatest moral and spiritual adventure on which the human race has ever embarked, and, however slow may be the progress, it will remain an abiding glory to this age of ours that it has had the faith and courage to attempt it. Since the close of the recent hostilities, the British Empire has

pursued a consistent policy of conciliation among all peoples, and by God's grace we will honour the bond which to-morrow will be made by continuing to exercise that spirit which in loyal and disinterested service loves the brotherhood and seeketh not her own.

There is a long and difficult road ahead of us, but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. We shall find sufficient inspiration, surely, to sacrifice and labour for the peace of the world—peace among the nations and peace among all sorts and conditions of men—in the knowledge that, though we die not having received the promises, yet occasions such as that of the morrow are reliable evidence that on the far horizon of human affairs there is already visible the silver light of the dawn of brighter and better days. For it is my faith, since I believe that the purposes of God are good, that lust, oppression, and cruelty are not permanent conditions of human society, but that a day is coming when men shall walk this earth in the likeness of their Creator's nature, and in a reign of justice and righteousness there shall be found none to make them afraid.

SERMON ON NEW YEAR'S EVE

*Preached at the Watch Night Service in St. Giles' Cathedral,
31st December 1928*

Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.—
St. Matthew xxviii. 20.

I

ONCE again it is New Year's Eve and we are met together here as is our wont. None can be insensible to the appeal of a service such as this, or irresponsive to the silent but eloquent suggestion of those venerable walls which through the centuries have witnessed the passing of so many generations.

At this hour of vigil, and beneath this high and holy roof, there is aroused even in the least imaginative a chastening consideration of our mortal frailty. Our measurement of time may be arbitrary and artificial ; but a year, after all, is an important unit in the aggregate of mortal existence. Few of us see more than threescore and ten of them, and the great majority not nearly so many. The passing of one year and the advent of its successor inevitably constitute an occasion which calls us to a halt and gives us cause for serious reflection. " So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom."

To the Scottish people, and possibly more to them than to their southern neighbours, the passing of the Old Year comes with a sense of wistful yet grand solemnity. From an immemorial past they have received their tradition of celebrating this occasion with something which in its spirit approaches a national and high religious festival. By some who do not quite

understand their history or psychology, this attitude is criticised as a rude survival from their pagan forebears, or as superficially sentimental, or emotionally hysterical. Such observations, however, do not disturb them. They certainly do not weaken their loyalty to this observance. So long as the Scottish race preserves its own peculiar idiosyncrasies, this season will be honoured by a recognition which combines the natural great-heartedness of the northern people with that rugged faith in Almighty God which has consistently been their characteristic.

The swift passage of time beats with a peculiar awe and force upon the imagination of a race which, owing to climatic conditions, a long record of political and religious struggles, and, until comparatively recently, a prevailing poverty, has been compelled to look upon human life with gravity and sober earnestness. In a memorable passage in *Heroes and Hero Worship*, Carlyle, for instance, writes true to his ancestral spirit: "That great mystery of TIME, were there no other; the illimitable, silent, never-resting thing called Time, rolling, rushing on, swift, silent, like an all-embracing ocean tide, on which we and all the Universe swim like exhalations, like apparitions which *are*, and then *are not*: this is forever very literally a miracle; a thing to strike us dumb—for we have no word to speak about it." Such words are strikingly representative of the Scottish mentality, and we have no cause to be ashamed of it.

No mere accident instilled into the Scottish people an unswerving trust in the strong arm of their fathers' God. Too often in their chequered story their religious faith was the last refuge left to them. It was not by mere haphazard that the Scottish theological outlook was often characterised by a sternness verging on fanatical intolerance. Their Church, its principles and its liberty, were purchased at the price of martyrdom and suffering. Nor is it a fortuitous occurrence that their music is steeped in melancholy and tears. The hopes

of lost causes sob in it, and faded dreams and national loss are the inspiration of its song. It is therefore not surprising that an imaginative race, deep and tender in its sympathies, strong in its robust religious faith, whose destiny it has been to fight and to endure for everything it holds dear, should recognise with an accentuated observance the passing years of human existence and the frailty and mortality of man.

So here again to-night is gathered this great congregation to forge another link in that chain which stretches through the past. Here again, as did our fathers, we come to face the inscrutable future and to cast our hopes and fears on God.

II

Some of you to-night are listening to the echoes of voices that are stilled and to the fading music of happy days that are gone for ever. Some of you in dreams are stretching out to clasp a vanished hand. We all are groping towards the divine reality which endures unchanged and unchanging above that "ever-rolling stream" which inexorably bears the sons of men from the known and familiar scenes of earth into the shadowed eternities of God. However we may escape this thought amid the crowding interests of common life, we cannot fail here and now to realise that our own years at their longest are but short and at their surest are most uncertain.

We are wise, then, if we do some honest thinking and make an effort to lay to heart the lessons of our experience as the Old Year passes from us. The book of memory, if we take the trouble to read it carefully, contains much wisdom and instruction which for the most part have been somewhat painfully acquired. Many of life's opportunities, as we all have good cause to know, never return; but quite a number of them by God's mercy do come back, and if we have missed

them in the past by our own carelessness and folly there is a future open to us still. This is not a time for morbid dejection or faithless remorse, at least not for those who profess and call themselves Christians and who believe in the universal presence of their Lord.

The Christian, however he may have sinned and failed and blundered, knows it to be rank disloyalty to his Master to hang his harp, tuneless and unstrung, upon the weeping willows of regret. He recognises with penitence and gratitude the obliterating mercy of the love of God, and sets himself afresh and with a renewed consecration to finish the work that is given him to do. Christianity came into a tired and hopeless world as the great assurance of a redeeming future. So to-night let even the darkest and most ruined life remember, and remembering take heart again, that out of the utmost moral wreckage God can still create something fair and beautiful to His glory. The road may be difficult, but we do not walk alone. "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

III

To turn from our more personal thoughts to society at large, the past year has afforded a shifting and uncertain scene of light and shadow in regard to the vital question of world peace. This is the first problem of modern politics and statesmanship. It underlies all other things, and we cannot regard it as a matter out-with our concern. Only a few days ago we celebrated the anniversary of the Incarnation and listened to the songs of the angels. We have learned little at the manger of Bethlehem if we have not realised with a deepened seriousness our individual responsibility towards the world for whose redemption Christ was born. The future of mankind depends upon the speedy creation of a public opinion which will reflect the

Christ-spirit, and public opinion is created by the thoughts and ideals entertained and the sentiments expressed by individual persons. Towards its formation you and I, consciously or unconsciously, are every day contributing.

What is our contribution? Is our attitude towards world affairs such as can qualify us for a place among those peacemakers who are called the children of God? Or are we enslaved to racial and geographical prejudice, selfishness, and animosity? Have we lifted our patriotism to the heights of a noble will to service, or is it besmirched by exclusiveness and arrogant political monomania? We can love our own friends without adopting a hostile or cantankerous attitude towards the remainder of society, and it is surely unnecessary to despise and dislike all other nations in order to love our own country best.

We have got to do some hard thinking about this. Things have not gone too well this past year, though here and there we have witnessed the glow of pacific achievement. The promise of a better understanding among the nations is still largely unfulfilled. But if we may be disposed to think that some of our neighbours are not proving alert and intelligent pupils in the school of the world's recent and bitter experience, we must continue to bear in mind that forbearance and goodwill on our part are qualities necessary for the solving of a difficult and complex situation. Amid much that is depressing let us not forget the brighter side, and remain ourselves loyal to the idealism of Christ, seeking peace with all men.

Those who faithfully strive in their own day and generation towards the establishment of human brotherhood may be confident that their cause cannot be lost. Bloodshed, intrigue, and oppression cannot endure for ever in a world created by a just and all-holy God to be the instrument of His righteous purposes. Though the vision tarry, let us be of good cheer. There will be

other days than ours ; and the promise of our Lord that He is with men alway is not for us only but for our succeeding race.

IV

In this connection may I address a few words to the young women in this congregation? For you the coming year is one of supreme importance. It is going to invest you with the responsibility of an active share in the government of this country. This is not a matter for cheap levity, but for your very serious consideration. Therefore I venture to speak to you especially.

What are you going to do about this new responsibility? You will first of all, I hope, learn to give to the utterances of public speakers and the views of the public press their just value but no more than that. Listening to the recital of other people's opinions cannot relieve you of your duty of cultivating your own intelligence and thinking for yourselves. You have got to educate yourselves as all of us have to do. But education is not merely the memorising of facts and figures. It consists primarily in the acquiring of a strength and independence of mind whereby the true worth of ideas may be weighed and estimated instead of blindly swallowed. A civic or political vote cast irresponsibly by a person who has not troubled to think is an outrage on a Christian community.

Secondly, I would suggest to you that you put not your trust in statesmen nor in politicians, no, nor in ecclesiastics either, but in the principles of the Kingdom of God, which, so history warns us, men and nations disregard at their peril, but in the keeping of which there is great reward. Justice, truth, and mercy, brotherhood, love, and service—think on these things and follow them. Make it your faith that a Christian world is not the dream of a deluded visionary but is a practical and realisable thing. From the first the faith

and heroism of Christ have never failed to appeal to the heart of woman.

She, while apostles shrank, could danger brave,
Last at His cross, and earliest at His grave.

You women have the future largely in your keeping. Personally, I am of those who contemplate that fact without trepidation and who are glad that the franchise has been extended to you. Though Dr. Johnson complained of "wretched, un-idea'd girls," he complained of many things, and the essential intellectual inferiority of women is now maintained only by reactionaries and ignorant bigots. In any event, the salvation of society depends on many qualities other than those purely intellectual, and we know that you possess them. The advisability of the age at which the franchise is now granted to both sexes alike is quite another matter. This, however, is neither the time nor the place for its discussion. But its very arguability only increases your Christian responsibility.

As you face the coming year and the new trust it will bring you, you need seek no further than St. Paul for a motto: "Let your citizenship be worthy of the gospel of Christ."

v

The peace of the world depends upon the purity of the patriotic motive among the nations. Patriotism is derivative from citizenship, and the character of our citizenship is determined by our attitude towards our Maker. The brotherhood of man postulates the Fatherhood of God, though some of us are a little apt to forget it. If we are to be Christian in our world outlook we must recognise an obligation not to our own country only. The moral implications of Christianity recognise no geographical frontiers or classifications of caste and colour.

Patriotism is a noble ideal, though it may be easily

degraded. "My country, right or wrong," unfortunately suggests more than those who glibly use this phrase apparently appreciate. It is a thoroughgoing denial of the Christian faith, since it makes the interests of a local nationality supreme over those of a universal brotherhood. It exalts the State above God and all that is God. It asserts that morals issue from the State, and if dictated by it to its citizens are valid even if they run directly against the standards of Christ. In other words, the warriors and politicians, the diplomats and the international financiers, are to be the ethical and spiritual dictators of mankind. This evil doctrine, constituting as it does a political conception which would have disgraced the thought of a primitive barbarism, should be shocking to the least intelligent Christian believer. To say, "My country, right or wrong," is the blatant boast of a swashbuckling infidel ; but to pray, "My country, may it reject the wrong and follow the right," is the humble expression of a disciple of Christ.

A man who truly loves a woman will respect all other women for her sake. It ought to be thus with the patriotic emotion. The exit from our present troubles lies in a quickened realisation of the unity and interdependence of mankind. "Am I my brother's keeper?" is a question which in his political and economic no less than in his moral and religious experience man has had plainly answered for him in the affirmative long ago.

If you young women can use your new opportunities to infuse this idealism into our corporate life you will be doing a very high service to your country and the world. Christianity begins with the individual. It works from the individual into the enlarged circle of domestic life. Thence it operates on society and thus moulds and directs our public opinion. Statesmen, from whose minds the ballot-box can never be far remote, do not act in defiance of public opinion. They

act and think with their fingers on its pulse. Thus it is that on the whole a democracy gets the rulers it deserves.

Womanhood has now a great future before it. It is probable that the extension of the franchise will in the long run have a distinct effect upon the course of subsequent history. In view of our experience one may be pardoned for believing that since you could hardly direct affairs into channels worse than many of those in which they have hitherto flowed, there is reasonable ground for hope that you will direct them into better.

As human life contains enough disillusionment without our going out of our way to look for it, do not imagine that you are going to establish an immediate Utopia. There are no short cuts to the Kingdom of God, though many foolish persons appear to think that by this means a satisfactory state of society can be reached. To all such false ideas Christ gave the corrective, and taught men to look for the Kingdom in a gradual purification of the human heart through the inward operation of the Holy Spirit. In the failures and disasters which have pursued with degradation and suffering the steps of those who have thought otherwise, history has vindicated His words. To think fearlessly, to cultivate the spirit that is willing to make sacrifices, to seek to work together for the common good, and in all things to try to love the brethren, constitute a task whose obvious difficulties are sufficient to show us that it is only through tribulation that we can enter into the Kingdom.

If we can make these principles our own we ought to achieve much, and even in our own day see some definite improvement in society at large. But we must not expect too much all at once, and above all we must learn to possess our souls in patience. Over the follies of mankind there is the providence and the timelessness of God. It is for us to be faithful in our Christian discipleship and to serve our generation when and how

and as we can. Those who commit their ways to Him, though they die not having received the promises, with faith may yet behold them afar off, for the wisdom that is from above is always justified of her children.

VI

The Old Year is dying and the New Year is at hand. May it bring with it a blessing to us and to all men ! Our hearts go out in sympathy to all our brethren of mankind, of every creed and rank and race and condition, who with us throughout the wide earth are sharing those deep and sacred emotions which this season awakens. May grace, mercy, and peace be with God's children everywhere !

Especially do our thoughts and affections take wings to that shadowed room where our beloved Sovereign lies in weakness and suffering. As the night brings out the stars, so has the sickness of our King revealed the unfathomed love and devotion which his people bear towards him. Indeed, by his bedside the whole world waits and watches. Nowhere is loyalty more true, anxiety more heavy, and prayer for him more fervent than in this his capital of Scotland. May the New Year bring for him a restoration to health and strength and to the service of the Empire committed to his charge, and may the consolation and the love of God be with his Queen and every member of the Royal House !

Nor do we forget those in loneliness, poverty, and distress, especially in those mining areas of our country where privation and unemployment have brought hopelessness to brave men's eyes, anxious dread to patient women, and pale thin checks to little children. The response of the community to the appeal on their behalf has been great and brotherly. But though we strive to succour them according to our power, the New Year dawns clouded by a grave economic problem which

cannot be permanently solved by any local and temporary alleviation. To this we can but trust that the wisdom, patience, and goodwill of all classes working together in friendship and sincerity will eventually find a solution. The new spirit which the past year has witnessed in the world of industry gives us hope of it. May the Lord hasten it in His time !

VII

As for ourselves, most of us are in need of a word of peace as the Old Year fades away. For none of us has it been all that it might have been, and we each have our own regrets. A good many hopes, ideals, and broken vows have been buried by the wayside. Some of you have suffered, and suffered in soul as well as in body. Some have been sorely tried and vexed and disappointed. Some have shed their tears in the darkness of life's saddening mysteries. But we have known and experienced also life's brighter and sweeter things. And there is surely none of us who does not at this hour thankfully own the Father's hand which has sustained and guided us far better than we knew.

The closing moments of the Old Year would be a depressing season but for our faith that at each milestone of our earthly journey stands the figure of Jesus Christ, His promised presence eternally fulfilled, at whose feet the burdened heart may lay its load, the sinful bathe their bruised spirits in the fountains of forgiveness, and the happy find their joy abundantly increased. Those who to-night pledge anew their loyalty to Him who trod before them the road of life will know with confidence and gratitude that, whatever their past may have been, for such as now will trust His love a fresh world is opening up and a future radiant with hope and promise.

Let us therefore face the future with faith and courage. The events that have befallen us, the dark

things as well as the bright and beautiful, have not been meaningless, but have each a purpose and an explanation preserved for us in an eternal world where those we have loved and lost await us. "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." We cannot tell what the coming year will hold for us, or for those who are dear to us, what of joy or sorrow, life or death. But we know that He who made us will not leave or forsake His children, and that, in whatever changes the future may bring, His love will still be ours, and all will and must be well.

In a few moments the old clock in the tower above us will strike the midnight hour. And now, as we kneel down in silent prayer, the message that I would give to you men and women, each with your own memories, your own anxieties, your own secret thoughts, is the message of Jesus Christ, your Friend and Saviour: "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

With grateful hearts the past we own ;
The future, all to us unknown,
We to thy guardian care commit,
And peaceful leave before thy feet.

ST. ANDREWS UNIVERSITY SERMON

*Preached in the College Chapel, Sunday Morning,
12th May 1929*

Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem. and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth ; and I will pardon it.—*Jeremiah v. 1.*

And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.—*St. John xii. 32.*

I

IN this passage the prophet reveals his opinion of contemporary society at Jerusalem. and it is not flattering. He declares it to be a city of hypocrisies whose citizens in their lives deny the religious profession of their lips. He does not allege that there is any definite lack of outward or ritual observance. Indeed, Jerusalem at this time appears to have been what we would describe as a church-going city. Jeremiah, anyhow, acknowledges it to be a community which says, "The Lord liveth." It declares its corporate belief in the being and sovereignty of God, and no doubt, as is our own custom, would have considered it only fitting to associate with the celebration of its major civic festivals an act of public worship. But it is this very outward profession which stirs the prophet to passionate indignation, for the common life and individual practice of the citizens show up their faith as an unreality and their religion as a sham. "Though they say, the Lord liveth," cries Jeremiah, "surely they swear falsely."

There are certain evidences in character and conduct which may not unreasonably be looked for as a merely

natural sequence from an honest faith in the existence of a righteous God. People who are genuinely convinced that

Beyond the loom of the last lone star, through open
darkness hurled,

Further than rebel comet dared or hiving star-swarm
swirled,

there lives a divine Personality working out a holy and rational purpose through all creation ; that above their business and their recreation, their politics and their religion, their several interests and activities, there is enthroned an eternal Being, infinite in beauty, truth, and goodness, ought to be relied upon to reflect this inward faith in outward action. Selfishness, oppression, cruelty and lies ; extortion and duplicity ; insincerity and disloyalties, do not harmonise with a declaration of belief in One who from His heavenly habitation beholds all dwellers on the earth. And most of us in those moments of reflection when we deal candidly with ourselves are not a little perturbed at the glaring inconsistency between many of our ideals and much of our conduct. Religion, as Bunyan observed, while it is the best armour a man can have, is the worst cloak.

So, surveying the life of his generation, Jeremiah is dismayed by the contradiction exhibited between its profession and its practice. They call upon God with their lips ; but whatever else may be characteristic of their general life, justice and truth, His attributes, are conspicuous by their absence. "Find me one man who executeth justice and seeketh truth !" That is the prophet's challenge. And the remainder of his sentence shows that he makes it with a melancholy confidence. He is convinced that the search for this individual will be a depressing process. It will go to and fro through the crowded streets, the busy squares, the broad places of the city, before that man be found, if indeed he ever be found at all. But, should the

search unearth him, he will demonstrate the infinite worth of one good man to the society in which he moves and has his being. "If there be found one that executeth judgment and seeketh the truth, I will pardon the city," saith the Lord.

II

The moral and religious teachers of mankind have consistently emphasised the supreme value of a good minority. And the central message of the Good News which came in Jesus Christ was its thrilling call of hope and encouragement to those who, being true to their ideals and following the highest light they knew, found themselves in a distinct numerical inferiority with a hostile and cynical world against them.

Our Lord never told those who desired to follow Him that their lines would fall in pleasant places or that they themselves were destined to popularity. On the contrary, He was frank in warning men and women what association with His cause would involve, and that a readiness to take up a cross was a condition of allegiance which could not be avoided. His appeal was to the adventurous and heroic, and not to the ignoble, in human nature. To be a Christian meant to be allied with the few against the many and the mighty, and to be the declared champion of a moral and spiritual idealism against which the powers of selfishness and materialism had mustered their big battalions. A religious life, as a great French writer reminds us, is a struggle before it is a hymn. The disciple of Jesus in the twentieth as in the first century need expect from the worldling nothing but the treatment which the Master Himself received. "If the world hate me," said our Lord to His friends, "it will also hate you."

But, such was the perfect equipoise of His sympathies, He always preserved a great understanding and compassion for that very worldling who hated Him, opposed

and thwarted Him. He knew, what some of the official exponents of His religion at times forget, how hard it is for ordinary men to preserve amid the glittering deceptiveness of the things that surround them that sure vision and level judgment which recognises what is seen to be temporal but what is unseen to be eternal. Faith in the Christian values as alone worth seeking is not come by easily. As a thing rises in worth, so correspondingly does its price increase.

Yet the Gospel pages ring with that reiterated call, "Be of good cheer!" He had overcome the world, and so would they who followed Him. He assured them that, however contrary might be appearances, they, and only they, who were true to His idealism were the lights of the earth. He strove to instil into His friends a robust and resolute confidence both in themselves and in His cause, and a supreme faith in the survival power and eventual victory of those principles and ideals for which He lived and was prepared to die. "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." The grain of mustard seed would, in God's own time, become a tree; and they would be wise who remembered that with the Lord a thousand years is as one day.

Those who are moved to despondency because the appeal of the Christian Church does not apparently arouse a universal response, either in this nation or in any other, view human affairs from a wholly different standpoint from that which was our Lord's. Christ quite naturally expected His Church to find tribulation, and He would be the last to be surprised to find, in our own day, many empty pews where His gospel was purely and fearlessly preached. We learn from the New Testament that from the time when His position was realised to be spiritual and not political—in short, that His Kingdom was not of this world—many turned and walked no more with Him. And we should be neither astonished nor dismayed if we find in our

own generation that the implications of Christianity frequently arouse hostility.

St. Peter, writing to the persecuted Christians of his times, assured them that if they were reproached for the name of Christ, happy indeed were they. But, realising as he did the necessity of an enlightened conviction, he further exhorted them, "Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you." The protagonist of Christianity must systematise and order his thoughts and ideas.

III

"Seek if ye can find a man." The world's sorest needs, despite the contrary assurances of many of our garrulous advisers, are neither political nor economic. Nor is the world's supreme need, as some have told us, for more first-class brains, desirable as such a commodity may be. We have by this time had evidence enough that first-class brains, unless allied with first-class character reflecting the mind of Christ, have a dangerous tendency to become the curse of society. The world's urgent need lies deep-rooted in a necessity for the development in individual lives of high moral character and lofty religious idealism.

Many of us, unfortunately, lose our sense of perspective as life goes on. We cease to recognise the obvious when we see it, we confuse life's greater issues and values. The world fixes us in its deadly grip. Our heads and our hearts become absorbed with our possessions and consumed by the lust for more. You must have known men and women, as I have known them, who once were characterised by earnestness of purpose, by intellectual culture, by the capacity for worship, by love of the good and appreciation of the beautiful, but who, driven to spiritual self-destruction before the insensate desire for the accumulation of mere things, have murdered their better instincts one by one.

Yet, what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Our common life, too, is often degraded by blatant and unashamed selfishness, by uninformed class antagonisms, and by a blind disregard of our duties towards our neighbours who have rights as well as we.

We are all more or less affected by such things, and have good cause to examine ourselves in order that we may see whether our outlook is that of free intelligent people, or is twisted and distorted by environment, acquired prejudice, or inherited tradition.

There is also an increasing tendency in many departments of life towards self-centred aggressiveness, and our public activities, both secular and ecclesiastical, are frequently disordered and robbed of their fruitfulness by the reckless conduct of parties and sections who are out mostly for their own hand. What we regard as selfish conduct in the individual we must also repudiate in the wider sphere of our corporate life. "It is of the utmost importance," once said Lord John Russell, "that a nation should have a correct standard by which to weigh the character of its rulers." And to this we might add, as someone has observed, that the true greatness of nations lies in exactly those same qualities which constitute greatness in an individual.

Back again we are forced to Christ's centre of emphasis. It is the individual, and always the individual. The Kingdom of God is within you. "The soul of all improvement is the improvement of the individual soul." Back again we are forced to His advice to all who are concerned with the world's troubles and filled with earnest anxiety to alleviate and banish them. It is the little leaven that leaveneth the lump, so He insists again and again. Therefore—and this is the inexorable first command of His social gospel—be you yourself true to your faith, your work, your personal responsibilities, remembering that by one man the

city will find its pardon. The Kingdom of God is as a grain of mustard seed !

This, of course, is not spectacular like mass meetings and bustling organised propaganda. But, God knows, it gets to the root of the matter.

Not in the clamour of the crowded street,
Not in the shouts and plaudits of the throng,
But in ourselves, are triumph and defeat !

IV

But idealism itself, we have frequently to remind ourselves, must be conditioned by the wisdom which is from above.

There is danger in the very fact that man cannot live wholly to himself, even if he wants to. Theodore Parker has shrewdly pointed out that if a man does not find a religion, he will cherish a superstition ; if he does not worship the true God, he will make for himself his secret idols. We must test, and rigorously test, the validity of what we worship and pursue. It is my faith that the mind of Christ, with its moral heroism, its spiritual beauty, its blazing certainty of God, represents the result of the final testing. By that standard, in all its compassion, truth, and love, yet too in all its sober wisdom, justice, and unswerving integrity, our opinions, views, and principles must be weighed in the balance and then rejected or accepted.

There is, for instance, much idealism abroad these days, enthusiastic and impassioned. It is a matter of grave urgency that we carefully examine it before accepting it as being wise in the sense in which Christ would define wisdom. Some of it is admittedly anti-Christian, as for example that movement which has temporarily obtained an ascendancy in Russia and which elsewhere has had its repercussions. Some of it, on the other hand, and this the most difficult to place,

humbly and reverently names the name of Jesus in connection with divers propaganda, even though its critics may, rightly or wrongly, consider such propaganda as evidencing tendencies which do not blend too well with His mind and spirit.

Idealism, however, even when in our view misguided, should always be listened to with respect. My young friends, if you would be good learners, you must first yourselves be patient listeners. Those who denounce new ideas unheard, in whom innovations upon use and wont produce instinctive reaction, and who scoff at earnestness when it does not coincide with their own preferences, are bigots, fools, and intellectual liars. The ocean of our social and religious thought is disturbed to-day by many conflicting currents. Let us try to keep a big and warm heart for humanity, and have the sympathy and common sense to respect genuine conviction and to realise that it is well worth our while to investigate the source and the value of all sincere ideas. The wind bloweth whither it listeth, and we never know from what unexpected quarter comes the life-giving whisper of the Holy Ghost. Our education must remain wholly incomplete until we have mastered this rudimentary but very difficult lesson.

Your task, who have had the inestimable advantage of cultural experience in an ancient seat of learning such as this, is to endeavour to preserve a wise moderation of outlook and humbly to try to adjust your own idealism to the mind of Christ. See, then, that you have the courage to discard it, and to seek for another, if such an adjustment cannot sincerely be effected. It must be your destiny to be leaders in the formation of a strong body of public opinion contributed to by men and women who are endeavouring to cultivate a sense of social responsibility and a hatred of ignorant catchwords and loose and slipshod thinking. Well, it is not enough merely to be enthusiastic. We know what road is paved with good intentions. We require to discipline

our minds, to use assiduously what intelligence God has given us, to practise restraint, and to endure in faith. We need to exercise, too, a control over our instincts and prejudices, and to submit our whole outlook on men and affairs to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. And, lastly, we will be wise to give more serious attention to the opinions and views which we often utter so carelessly. The spoken word, however idly used, has a potency and an influence concerning the gravity of which we all from time to time are made aware. The tongue can do much evil, and those who irresponsibly indulge in what Homer called its "windy satisfaction" generally contrive to work a power of mischief.

v

In conclusion, let me revert to what we considered at the outset—the supreme value of a good minority.

Whatever life may bring you, and whatever it may take away, you do not need to be with the crowd to have your own personal influence really effective. Beware of accepting popular verdicts without analysis and scrutiny, just because they are supported by numbers. Nor is established authority infallible. It poisoned Socrates, crucified Christ, and burned St. Joan of Arc to death. Do not be discouraged if your ideas are rejected and your way is not followed. That which matters is that you should follow God's light as you see it, in humility and honesty of heart. "Light, more light!" cried Goethe as he died. "Light, more light!" should be your prayer each day you live. The home of culture, such as this, must even in our vulgarised age remain the highest inspiration of practical human endeavour. Emerson was fond of insisting that the driving force of the world consists of ideas. It is thought that creates action. Those who seek the truth shall save the city. Let us then bravely continue on our search, even though truth prove elusive, as it must.

We have not been created in the image of God just to think what other people choose to think or to be content with doing just what other people think good enough to do.

Every one of us, says Froude, whatever our speculative opinions, knows better than he practises, and recognises a better law than he obeys. And, dim and faltering as our faith may be, and though weak and unworthy our best allegiance, we know in our inmost souls that the way of life has been revealed in Him who stands unique among the sons of men as the Father's perfect witness to Himself. Though that truth, being of the very nature of God, be so manifold and many-sided that it must take all churches and all kindreds and all ages, yes, and possibly other worlds than this, before mankind can know and apprehend it, as it is, in all its grandeur and its beauty, yet our immediate task is to follow Him now in this present world, and then wherever He may lead hereafter. "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." So said He himself. But though a fuller revelation awaits us beyond these terrestrial scenes, He has told us sufficient to guide us on our earthly way.

There is nothing in the world so strong in influence as human personality. There is none of us but has owed something to the personal influence of some dear friend. It is the personality of Christ that calls forth all that is best in human nature—His courage, strength, and gentleness, His love and power, His sympathy and understanding, His mercy and His pity. Not only those who confess His divinity—not only those, in whose fellowship I humbly place myself, who see Him as co-eternal with the Father, the divine agent of creation, the Word of God, made incarnate in time, but stretching from the first unto the last—but thousands who cannot make such a confession, share alike in their devotion to His example, and gladly number themselves

among His people. Yes ; everywhere where men admit a loyalty to something higher than themselves, wherever they are ready to live and to die for any splendid idea, you find the influence of His spirit and see an act of homage at His cross.

“ Seek if ye can find a man, and I will pardon the city.” Young men and women, whatever you may question in this bewildering and mysterious world, never doubt the eternal influence of your own life and character. Amid the noise and tumult of affairs ; when men, some of whom know no better, and some of whom ought to know better, requite your good with evil and your unselfish devotion with contempt ; in the dark and terrible hour when that to which you have given the best of your heart and brain is spurned by bigoted stupidity and reduced to wreckage by the blind prejudice of fools ; when the most cherished ideals and convictions of your souls can find no place even in the hearts of those you care for most ; when loyalty to your faith demands of you misunderstanding, loneliness, and loss—well, look yonder to

those holy fields,
Over whose acres walked those blessed feet,
Which, nineteen hundred years ago, were nailed
For our advantage on the bitter cross.

There He is, because of His faith, treading the wine-press alone, with level eyes and head unbowed, and a heart that was loving and understanding still for those who would not or could not understand.

And from Him, one lonely but gallant youth walking so bravely those Galilean fields, has come the peace of God to the restless hearts of men. Through Him—and is it not because He is alive for evermore, and, freed from the limitations of time and space, is with men alway, ever present with His people?—comes that inward power which, inexhaustible, continually rejuvenates and galvanises to new life His Church on earth,

which, itself the extension of His incarnation, seeks in all ages to draw men into Him. Yes ; and because no institution however holy and divine can limit the operation of His grace, He lives among men everywhere, the light that is beyond all light, the loveliness that men dream of but have never seen and in this world can never see. He to whom all power hath been given in heaven and in earth is the source of whatever seeks to lift, to ennoble, and to beautify. He is the chastener of human passion, the wise controller of human enthusiasms, the gentle and moderating voice which guides, directs, and sways the turbulent wills of men.

From Him is all that soothes the life of man,
His high endeavour and his glad success,
His strength to suffer and his will to serve.

There is no sphere of life, no enterprise into which the vicissitudes or responsibilities of our lot may call us, but in which He is, and remains for ever, the supreme standard of judgment, thought, and conduct. "What would Jesus do?" is still the question which in things trivial and commonplace as well as critical and weighty each one of us ought daily and hourly to ask of his conscience and endeavour to answer in his practice.

VI

In such an identification of our lives, our work, and our endeavours with His mind, there is a security to be found in life and in death. We know ourselves to be safe amid the universe, since that universe is His, and He is able to keep what we have committed to His trust. Whatever we may have to leave behind us when we pass from these temporal scenes, we may be assured that, in whatever worlds our souls may hereafter find themselves, the values of Christ and the dominion of His love will still endure. Wherever it be in the vasty

deeps of God that faithful spirits live in the presence of their Creator, there must remain with them, and as their indestructible possession, what in their mortal experience has been gracious, good, and true. This indeed can give a glory and a splendour to all human toil and enterprise, and to every effort to elevate our character and to ennoble our desires. For though the tabernacle of this earthly house must one day be dissolved, and though this planet, this "small parenthesis in eternity," on which the human race has now its temporary home must eventually collapse into nothingness, the selfless exercise of our highest capacities and the courageous practice of all Christ-like virtues must inevitably be building for us elsewhere an enduring habitation, an House of God, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

ADDRESS AT THE FUNERAL OF THE EARL OF
ROSEBERY AND MIDLOTHIAN, K.G., K.T.

St. Giles' Cathedral, 25th May 1929

[The body of Lord Rosebery was brought from Epsom to St. Giles' Cathedral, where a funeral service was held prior to the burial in the family vault in the old Norman church of Dalmeny. H.R.H. the Duke of York attended the service in St. Giles' as the representative of His Majesty the King.]

AROUND the bier of the most representative Scotsman of his time, we are gathered for these last offices of faith and love. Archibald Philip, Earl of Rosebery and Midlothian, has passed to his rest amid a nation's mourning. It is appropriate indeed that ere his mortal body is gathered to mingle with his fathers' dust, it should be brought here to this church so dear to every Scottish heart. No more fitting scene could there be for the last rites of one who in mind and character so epitomised the spirit of the northern people than this venerable fane which enshrines the very soul of Scotland. Was it not these storied walls that he himself selected whereon to commemorate his well-beloved son, cut off in the dawn of such radiant promise? ¹

We remember with gratitude and admiration the brilliant gifts and high achievements which crowned the life of our departed brother, his sense of honour and responsibility, his unswerving allegiance to all that in our common life advanced the ideals of beauty and of dignity, his consistent testimony (as he himself put it)

¹ Captain the Right Hon. Neil James Archibald Primrose, M.P., M.C., killed 15th November 1917 at Hill of Gezer, Palestine, and buried at Ramleh.

on behalf of antiquity where it was threatened by an unnecessary development of utility, his selfless consecration of his years and powers to the service and welfare of the State. Yet chiefly to-day do we remember, and remembering are proud and thankful, how greatly he loved Scotland and how greatly Scotland gave its love to him.

Raised to an unchallenged supremacy in the affection and esteem of the Scottish nation, for two generations he reigned among us as the recognised spokesman of his native land, the alert and jealous guardian of its traditions, the indomitable champion of its interests. Wise and just in his counsel, courteous and tolerant in controversy, in hours of crisis always self-collected, he sought no private advantage nor pursued his personal ends, but unreservedly placed his unique capacities at the service of his country and incessantly worked for the public good.

Exegi monumentum ære perennius, said Horace ; though experience warns us that it is dangerous to prognosticate that aught that any man may leave behind him will remain for ever impervious to " the wasting shower, the unavailing north wind, or an innumerable succession of years, and the flight of seasons." But let others do the work of the biographical critic, weighing the values of our brother's public career, estimating his achievements, assigning him his place in history. For us, though that silver tongue be stilled, the voice of Rosebery yet speaketh ; and though that golden pen be broken, the influence of his spirit will abide.

He has gone from us full of years and full of honour. What nobler diadem than this can crown man's earthly span, that at the last he comes back to his own people to find his resting-place sanctified by his country's love ? In the presence of the over-shadowing mystery of death, especially the death of one who made himself so truly great as he, we cannot fail to be acutely reminded of the transiency of earthly glory and the mutability of

mortal affairs. Yet more insistent in the heart is the whispered assurance of an eternal world where our imperfect human endeavours find fulfilment, and where each faithful spirit lives for ever unto God.

Brave heart, and very perfect gentleman, leal servant of his King, true friend of the people, we commit his body to the ground, and we commend his soul to Him who gave it birth.

SERMON ON THE LAST GENERAL ASSEMBLY
SUNDAY OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND
PRIOR TO THE UNION OF THE
SCOTTISH CHURCHES

*Preached in St. Giles' Cathedral, Sunday Morning, 26th
May 1929, T.R.H. the Duke of York, K.G., K.T.,
Lord High Commissioner, and the Duchess of York
being present.*

That they all may be one ; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us.—*St. John xvii. 21.*

I

WE are living in restless times. Our age is unsettled not only in its social, political, and industrial affairs, but also and perhaps most of all in the sphere of its religious thought. Many people are troubled by a sense of spiritual insecurity. Faith, disturbed by the recent world catastrophe, is searching for an anchorage. There is, as in periods of upheaval there has always been, a drift away on the part of a considerable number from any allegiance to the organised Church. This situation, however, has so frequently repeated itself during the last twenty centuries, and eventually found readjustment, that the observer of human affairs, while recognising its seriousness, is no longer disposed to declare in alarm that the Church has lost its hold upon mankind.

At the same time, the atmosphere of our days is by no means wholly irreligious, despite the fact that life is becoming increasingly secularised and active hostility is

shown in some quarters towards Christian doctrine and ethics. People are befogged and bewildered because so much on which they relied has seemed to fail them ; but multitudes who have but little connection with the Church are searching after some abiding reality amid the wreckage of an era in which many traditions, cherished ideas, and venerated institutions have in the crisis of the world's agony been weighed in the balance and found wanting. We must recognise that a chapter of human history definitely reached its close in the European War. An entirely new age is dawning charged with infinite possibilities for good or evil. It has dawned and we have got to face it. Most people have sufficient decency in them to want to face it, and to face it bravely.

Deep down in the average individual's composition there is something of the heroic, as you cannot have failed to observe if with understanding and sympathy you have watched the difficulties, trials, and disappointments of most people's lives and the extraordinary courage with which they face them. The ideal of a better world for which our brothers so lately fought and died has not faded from our hearts. There is none with a spark of true manhood or womanhood but would like to have some share, however small, in laying its foundations. Man cannot live to himself alone, even if he would. In him there stirs a blind conviction that somehow he has been called into being to put the gift of life to a nobler use than that of a reckless squander-maniac of time and opportunity. Instinctive to his nature is a belief, or, as someone has said, if he will not admit belief he cannot deny a strong suspicion, that behind the veil of the visible creation there exists a divine Being to whom he owes a personal allegiance. What is our relationship to Him, and what is His will concerning us ?

II

The mystery of human life appealed in a peculiar fashion to Sir Thomas Browne, the author of that charming classic, *Religio de Medici*. He went so far as to say that there are not mysteries enough in this world, that indeed man's faith would be stronger if the mysteries of his existence were greater. This extraordinary statement, however, does not meet with general agreement. The enigmas of mortal life are more than sufficient for most of us. God is in the thick darkness at many a stage of our earthly pilgrimage, and a thousand problems demand our investigation and stubbornly defy solution. Dryden, I think, more truly voices men's common experience when he says :

On what strange grounds we build our hopes and fears :
Man's life is all a mist, and in the dark
Our fortunes meet us.

And even to the saintly Newman the kindly light shone fitfully amid encircling gloom.

We all, however weak our imaginative capacity may be, have our moments of deeper reflection when the immensities of the universe in which we live descend upon us in an overwhelming bewilderment and lay a strange awe upon our lives. There is none, for instance, who has not with the Psalmist looked unto the heavens in the stillness of the night and heard with wonder the voiceless music of the spheres stealing through a firmament ablaze with moon and stars. A hundred million suns are looking down on this whirling speck of matter on which for a time the human race is destined to have its being, itself a mere insignificant entity amid the uncharted infinitudes of illimitable space. What power controls these moving worlds, hung in the void in perfect equipoise ? What hand directs their courses, binds them to their appointed place, and determines each detail of that mighty plan ?

And what is man that such omnipotent Mind should think on him, and the son of man that it should care for him? Are these worlds conscious of us, as ours is conscious of them? Are life and intelligence active there as they are active here? And we ourselves, the children of mortality, so small and yet so great, creatures of a swiftly-passing day, but filled with desires and aspirations which only eternity could satisfy, what are we? Whence did we come and whither are we going? Who has not felt the mystery of his own identity? This ego, this self, this conscious thinking being, enclosed in a tabernacle of perishable clay, capable of unspeakable degradation yet of heights of godlike moral and spiritual grandeur, what is it?

Here in this holy place we share the traditions of a thousand years, yet now of all their mingled peace and strife there is naught but silence left. Age after age the generations have come up here to lift the hands of prayer to God, and then, laying down their burdens, have crept away into the shadows. And on the passing pageantry of it all, these ancient walls have looked down; but to-day they tell us nothing save to whisper of the evanescence of human life. Over us, too, the wind will pass, and this place will know us no more. Only, to us and to all these vanished ages one thought was common—the thought that life is bigger than we know. To us and to them one yearning hope was common—the hope that the soul of man can never die.

So long as man continues to walk this earth he will continue to ask himself these questions, and so long as he asks himself these questions he will continue his endeavour to wrest from life's mysteries a clearer knowledge and understanding of Him who stands behind them.

III

This Trinity Sunday morning the thought of the Church is concentrated on the Christian expression of the idea of God as in one majestic statement it sums up the various truths and episodes which have been commemorated throughout the Christian year. This idea is embodied in the great assertion that God is three, yet God is one, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, three persons in one holy and undivided trinity in unity. Now, we cannot dismiss as an unimportant piece of theological speculation, which sounds sonorous and impressive but in fact means little, this statement to which the Catholic Church has given so agelong an adherence. Ideas which are not deeply rooted in essential reality do not have such survival power. We must reverently consider it and try to make something of it which we can adjust to our own faith and experience. When preaching to you on this subject and from this pulpit my distinguished predecessor once very aptly observed : " It is an insult to our intelligence to tell us that we should not trouble about its meaning. If these words have no meaning for us we should not use them. It cannot be edifying either to utter or to hear mere empty sounds."

The modern tendency is towards what is called credal simplification and a restatement of religious belief. There is much which may be said in its support, though the resultant dangers may be seen in the fact that in some quarters the traditional dogmas of orthodox Christianity are to-day at a discount. This demand is representative of a general attitude of mind, and is vocal in spheres other than the religious. For instance, you find it loud and strong in the realm of art. The cry of the modern man who professes interest in such things is for forms of artistic expression which make no heavy demand either upon his perceptive faculties or his intelligence, but can be understood and assimilated

at a glance. He is forgetful, perhaps, that nothing that is truly great can with a ready facility be grasped or properly digested.

It is, however, but idle to maintain, as many do, that by rescuing the Jesus of history from the doctrinal trap-pings of the ages mankind thereby is presented with a simple and straightforward creed whose reception involves no intellectual difficulties. Strip the orthodox Christian theology as bare as you will, leave it naked Unitarianism if you like, you still are left with the stupendous assertion of the Galilean that God is love, than which none more hard of acceptance can come before the human mind. Belief in it comes easily only to those to whom religion is superficial and from whom its vaster realities and significance are wholly remote.

One of our most distinguished contemporary theologians has rightly pointed out that while most people take the love of God as an obvious axiom in religious thought, it is neither obvious nor axiomatic. To discover the love of God in the disastrous crucifixion of Jesus Christ is an attainment of faith and reason which to reach seriously and convincingly takes a more strenuous effort than some are apt to imagine. We are faced with many problems in these days, but none greater than that serious thinking is very unpopular. The mental habits of the great majority are slack and slipshod. And this should be met by the Church not with surrender but with challenge. Yet there is a widespread disposition on the part of preachers to smooth away difficulties and sacrifice accuracy in order to accommodate the Christian theology to the man in the street, who does not know, and never did, that truth by its very nature cannot be obvious and certainly never can be easy. Bernard Gilpin, the zealous sixteenth-century apostle of education, once said that people frequently reject great truths not so much from want of evidence as from want of an inclination to search for them. We all have good cause to remind our-

selves that, to obtain reliable and reasoned convictions upon anything worth while, the price must be paid in energy and sincerity of mind, strenuous application of our faculties, and honesty and thoroughness of thought.

It is not then to be wondered at if we are told, as so frequently we are, that the doctrine of the Trinity is in fact not inherent in the Christian religion at all, and is calculated only to confuse the mind and baffle the faith of many who desire to be humble followers of Jesus Christ. Such assertions must be most strongly repudiated. It is historically quite inaccurate to regard the trinitarian statement of God as a man-made excrescence on the primitive Gospel of the New Testament, though the Church may justly be upbraided for the misleading and ambiguous language in which it has so often received official expression. The Christian doctrines are not haphazard growths, and, however discreditable may have been episodes witnessed at those councils where the creeds were hammered out, no one could for a moment accept them as haphazard who has any belief whatever in the working of divine providence and the guidance and inspiration of the Holy Spirit. They are the crystallising of the spiritual experience of Christendom in its passionate search after the truth of God. And in the conception of Him as Three in One, and One in Three, we have that idea of the Deity which is the rich fruit of Christian thought as it has endeavoured to explore His nature and His relationship to the life of mankind by means of His supreme revelation of Himself in Jesus Christ.

IV

The doctrine of the Holy Trinity is not then a meaningless addition of speculative theologians to that simple faith in a heavenly Father which was preached to men by our Lord. The rather is it an attempt, and a reverent and sincere attempt, to put into a concrete

formula man's own experience of the nature and character of God in the light of all that the Saviour was and said. Christendom was very early faced both with the necessity of guarding the oneness or unity of God and at the same time relating to Him its own experience of the Holy Spirit and of the Person of Christ ; and in any solution of the latter, as Professor Foakes-Jackson has pointed out, " three things were demanded : a Man who actually lived, worked, and suffered ; a Divine Word whose presence has always been in the world, but has been manifested with a special power since the Incarnation ; and One, human and yet divine, who is constantly revealing Himself with increasing clearness to the conscience of man." And this has not unnaturally proved a task of immense difficulty, as the Church discovered ere a century of its history had passed. Generation after generation the doctrine of the Trinity has been the cause of argument and dissension, and still to-day, though by this time we ought to have learned how to state it better, controversy abounds as to what that vexed word " person " really implies. What do we mean when we apply the term " person " to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost ? In what manner are these three distinct in the Godhead and separate from one another ? And if there be a clear distinction of " persons," how then can they be only one ? We must try to answer this, for it is injurious to our religious life to repeat in our worship of God words whose meaning we do not understand and have made no effort to discover.

Well, to find a reasonable and at the same time orthodox answer to this question we must recognise at the outset that different languages have their own peculiar limitations. The subtleties of one very frequently cannot be reproduced in another, even though you use the same words. And so the word " person " in Latin and the words " God " and " divine " in Greek can have shades of significance which we cannot quite recapture

when we use them in our own tongue. Now, when we talk of the "persons" in the Godhead we do not give to the word "person" exactly the same meaning which it has when we use it in the English language. To do so, as Dr. Hastings Rashdall cautioned us, would immediately involve us in the identical misunderstanding which led not a few of the early fathers of the Church towards a conception of the Holy Trinity which was really not monotheistic at all, and in fact was but little removed from an acknowledgment of the existence of three separate and distinct Gods. Of these early theologians, a great many had been converted from paganism to Christianity, and it was no doubt their Greek upbringing and training, accustoming them as it had to the idea of a number of deities graded in power and prestige, which made it fatally easy for them to slip into such an error. But at any rate not a few of them in referring to our Lord used terms of speech which seem clearly to indicate that they thought of Him not only as distinct from but as inferior to the Father. It was to establish the absolute equality of the Father and the Son in the Godhead that there arose the long controversy between Athanasius and Arius ; and the Nicene Creed, which we will repeat this morning at Holy Communion, compiled at the Council of Nicæa in the year 325, and the result of the victory of the former, finally declared that the Son and the Father were co-equal and that God was incarnate in Jesus Christ. You will remember how, and possibly now the better understand why, it insists on this fact—Christ is emphatically stated to be "God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God."

It is, moreover, no more than true to say that, since the days of St. Augustine, Christian theology has done its best, though not always with conspicuous success, to make it understood that the Three Persons in the Trinity are not rightly defined as three distinct and opposite personalities, as we would understand the

term, existing side by side from and through all eternity, but can be more accurately apprehended as three wholly separate manifestations or activities of the one divine Mind—though even that is not quite adequate, since Christian thought as a result of its real and deep experience has felt itself forced to attribute to these activities something further, a “moreness” which we can best define as specific personal character. But we do not really compare the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost in their relationship to one another just as we would compare the relationship of three separate human beings. Rather, thinking not so much in terms of individuals as in terms of what Dr. Gwatkin calls “three eternal aspects of the divine, facing inward on each other as well as outward on the world,” do we seek to show the unfathomable riches of the divine nature, the length, depth, breadth, and height of God’s love, and the manifold workings of the eternal Mind through all the process of creation and redemption. St. Augustine compared the relationship to one another of the three Persons in the Godhead by distinguishing between Memory, Wisdom, and Will or Love as they exist and operate in a human mind; and St. Thomas Aquinas found his solution of the Trinity in a distinction between Power, Wisdom, and Will or Love as they severally exist and operate in the Mind of the Eternal Being. And thinking thus, we find ere long that we are making a thoroughly intelligible statement when we say, “The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God; and yet they are not three Gods but one God.”

If we begin our thinking on this matter along these lines, and pursue it reverently and sincerely—and it is the noblest and the greatest theme on which the thought of man can dwell—we will find that it must inevitably lead us not away from but towards a more sure and steadfast faith in the divinity of Christ, in whom the Word or Wisdom of God was made flesh—that is, in whom God Himself really and actually dwelt incarnate,

very man yet very God ; and, as Dr. Rashdall said, we will with more quickened understanding hear that great and glorious declaration : “ Herein was the love of God manifested towards us, because that God hath sent His only begotten Son into the world that we might live through Him.” Truly it is not of the man who made himself God, and of whom we read in some modern popular literature, but only of the man in whom God Himself came down to dwell, that we can say, “ Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.”

V

When all this has been said, we have still to remember that the doctrine of the Holy Trinity represents an effort to state in words that which words can never fully state. Our mortal tongues are poor and stammering mediums when it comes to expressing the august things of God. Human intelligence even at its best is weak and fallible, and in the presence of the things eternal our vision is but through a glass darkly and we can only use the inadequate speech we know. All that we think and say is subject to the limitations of our finite minds, which cannot comprehend the infinite. And it is in the full knowledge of all this, that the Christian looks towards that calm eternity where his God and Father dwells and tries to visualise Him in terms of human thought. That vision is bound to be incomplete and the statement of it imperfect. But at the same time it is the Christian's own inward experience of Christ that clothes his conception of the love and majesty of God in the adoring words :

Holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty,
God in Three Persons, Blessed Trinity !

And ere we leave the consideration of this aspect of our subject, it may be helpful to remember a striking and very illuminating illustration used by Bishop Gore. He

draws an arresting analogy from that tendency to optical illusion which is caused by distance. The slopes of a far-off mountain appear to you as a uniform surface, a mellowed, flat, and even whole. It is as you come nearer that closer proximity brings out in vivid clearness what you did not see before. The monotony of the mountain face is now broken up by chasm and ravine. Things have become obvious which the distance had veiled. And so it is in the approach of man to the knowledge of God. Viewed from pre-Christian thought He had stood a remote, immense, and austere unity. But new light fell upon Him as in Jesus Christ He came nigh to men. He became revealed as not only one but manifold in His nature. And this dawned on mankind through that unique gospel from Galilee with its new insistence on the unlimited love of the heavenly Father.

The insistence by Jesus that God was love was original and startling to a world whose thought had never before dimly approached such a conception. It demanded a new thinking out of God, a fresh investigation of what He really was, and a total readjustment of all ideas concerning Him. Through the gospel of Christ and the terrific implications of His death and resurrection man learned certain things. He learned that there was a Father sending, and a Son sent to reveal Him, and a Holy Spirit proceeding from both and giving light and truth and peace to men. These three were love in all its fullness and all its power. It was with the loving Father, the beloved Son, and the active love-bestowing Holy Spirit that Christian thought endeavoured to grapple, though to find a formula for it all seemed beyond the power of language. The doctrine of the Trinity is an endeavour to make concrete and personal, rather than abstract, the truth that God is love, and love in all its activities, loving, giving, sending. And this the Christian Church has found to be best expressed in Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, God manifold yet one.

VI

And again, this statement of God is evolved from the Christian belief that He is the goal and consummation of human destiny,

the one, far-off, divine event,
To which the whole creation moves.

The more I read history, and the more I humbly try to appreciate its lessons, the more surely am I convinced that at the heart of all things there lives a Person whose immutable nature outlasts all time and change, and who through all is working out a good and holy purpose. There is a providence which marks the fall of the sparrow no less than the fall of empires, and whose power must be capable of controlling that which is least as well as that which is most great. There is a watchful care, a benign and gracious intelligence, determining the function of each blade of grass, each flower that opens, and controlling the stars and setting its limits to the ocean. There is a wisdom and a love which human selfishness and sin can wound and for a while can thwart and hinder, but which they cannot ultimately defeat or impair. There is a God who through light and darkness, triumph and defeat, is the guide and protector of His children, whose goodness leads and whose wisdom disciplines those turbulent and wayward souls of ours which He has created to be partakers of His own eternal life. And there is an ideal rooted in God Himself towards which humanity, sometimes consciously and frequently unconsciously, is continuously and persistently striving. The supreme spiritual fact which underlies that striving is a definite and clear reflection of what God Himself is.

That spiritual fact is the everlasting search of man for concord, unity, and peace. Harmony and not discord is the ultimate desire of the human heart. Man, when he does himself justice and truly evidences his better nature, is neither a brigand nor a cut-throat. He is a kindly, lovable creature desiring companionship and

goodwill with his fellow-men. His blundering history is stained with the sordid records of arrogance, greed, stupidity, bloodshed, and oppression. But this does not obliterate the fact that such things do not represent him at his best, but are obstinate and wilful betrayals by himself of the secret ideals of his own soul. The dream of unity is always there—"That they all may be one!"—living, vital, beating up from the depths of the human heart.

That ideal, of course, has been subject to expansion and development which is by no means at an end. It drew the family into the tribe, and the tribe into the nation. In our own times it has adventured further and has conceived of the nations themselves being leagued together in a world-wide federation. Undoubtedly at first the ideal was born in a mere search for strength and material aggrandisement. But it did teach men through much bitter experience that division and hostility meant weakness and inefficiency, and that unity and concord meant the reverse. In the gradual appreciation of this truth religious thought found its great opportunity to lift the ideal and "set it in the light of the will and purpose of the Creator." The cynic may smile and wax contemptuous at the suggestion, but it cannot be denied that the quest for the brotherhood of men and the throbbing desire for human unity are not adequately explained in terms of economics or the necessity for finding the best working policy for society in general. They are more truly the instinctive response in the enlightened soul of man to the searching love of the God who made him and who planted eternity in his heart. Deep calleth unto deep, and the human heart with all its folly does respond to the pleadings of the Holy Ghost. "That they all may be one," is the ideal of the human race.

VII

We may thus find matter for hopeful anticipation

rather than for despair in the troubles and disordered life of our own age. We cannot with any discrimination or understanding read the signs of our times without discovering in them much that gives rise to confidence. A discontented and disillusioned world, though its attendant dangers be great, is better material for the formative hand of God than a world basking in the smugness of a complacent stagnation. Many of us indeed would be better employed these days if, instead of sitting in our arm-chairs and complaining of the degeneracy of modern civilisation, we would go down on our knees and humbly ask for ourselves the light of God to teach us our own duties and show us His ways.

If there are some young people who would be well advised to remember that wisdom was not born with them, there are as many middle-aged folk, comfortable, bigoted, and settled in their rut, who have equal need to consider whether in the seething restlessness of the younger generation which it is so fashionable among their elders to deplore there may not be something true and Godward after all, and whether in their own more matured outlook there may not be quite a little which is wholly obsolete and reactionary. When I see the young full of irreflective rebellion against established things, I often find myself praying in my heart that after a while, when they have found their feet and have learned in the world's hard school of experience how stubborn facts can be, they will not lose all of their glorious spirit of adventure. I pray that they will not sink into an inert submission towards things as they are, but will remain rebels against injustice, selfishness, and cruelty, and all human ignorance and wrong. We need, in truth, rebellion on the part of all men of goodwill against those hideous social iniquities which, God forgive us, we still tolerate.

As I look into the future, I seem to see the figure of the Son of Mary hovering over the dark masses of mankind. I see Him drawing the nations closer, draw-

ing the churches closer, leading the world of labour and capital through its wranglings and prejudices towards juster aspirations and broader sympathies. I see Him teaching reverence to science and tolerance to theology, and drawing the scientist and theologian together too. There is much noise about us, much disputation, and the clamour of the tongues of men is loud. Society is seething with unrest. But let us be careful that we read the signs of our times aright. Are we sure that the river of human brotherhood is not boiling at its sluice-gates, which only the heart of man can open, ready, if but liberated, to descend like a torrent upon an expectant world?

It is not true to say that good cannot come out of evil. Good can and does come out of evil in the providence of Him who turneth even the wrath of men to His praise. From the martyrdom of Christ upon the cross came the redemption of the souls of men. Need we doubt that from the martyrdom of the flower of European civilisation which in our own day we have witnessed there is going to come something of good for the earth? Indeed, it may be that we have entered an era in which, if men will but take the tide of God's opportunity at its flood, Jesus Christ in a measure never before experienced in historic times is coming to His own. I refuse to believe that the tumult of this generation is adequately interpreted as the mere raving of a world gone temporarily insane. Nay, rather it sounds to me more like the rumble of the chariot wheels of God as in the awakening hearts of many He cometh to His kingdom.

When I am tempted to despair of the future of mankind—as indeed at times I am, for nothing can be quite so disappointing as human nature—I find my mental equilibrium restored when I conjure up a picture. It is that of a young man, virile and strong, kneeling at nightfall in a lonely garden. On his upturned face the dew is glistening, mingled with a bloody sweat of inward

agony. He is making a desperate resolve to vindicate his faith in God and man. He is going to a cross. I hear him pray, "That they all may be one ; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us : that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." And I will only be a pessimist when I am persuaded that He spoke in the madness of delirium when He said, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."

VIII

These thoughts then are reflected for us this Trinity Sunday in the Christian idea of God. Man struggles to be one, but God is one ; and the destiny of man is surely at the last to reflect the nature and character of his Creator. Here on the earth we mortals, separated from our brethren by the circumstances of environment, by prejudice, self-interest, and inherited tradition, grope our way through the mists in search of concord and of unity. Our search, however disappointing in its immediate results, is nevertheless for a certain and realisable ideal and not for a will-o'-the-wisp, for we look for a unity which already is existent in the being and life of God. In Him, three diverse manifestations of personality are wholly and completely one. In His image we are created. His life is the original, and ours but the imperfect copy, a theme which has been impressively elaborated by that saintly soul Forbes Robinson in one of his beautiful *Letters to his Friends*. But if the destiny of man is to attain to the likeness of his Maker, one day he will most surely achieve that which now the life of God exhibits.

Our goal, however, is not a dreary uniformity. It is not the extinction of diversity of view, of opposition of ideas, or of the conflict of intelligences. It is not the sinking of intellectual conviction into the stagnation of an unreal and ignoble peace. It is man's duty, after all,

to be the first edition of himself. It is opinion striking against opinion that sends forth the spark which ignites the lamp of truth. Our goal is a unity of heart in which diversities of mind may live and operate, even as three are unified in the Eternal Being, attuned to perfect harmony on the keynote of sympathetic understanding and Christian love. If this be ours, our differences need not divide us nor our controversies leave us unkind ; for then over the council-chambers and the workshops of the world, even as over its temples, would be written, " Beloved, since God so loved us, we ought also to love one another."

IX

Reflections such as these may help us to appreciate more truly the significance of this service. This is indeed a solemn and a moving hour. Our hearts are aglow with anticipation of that ecclesiastical union which ere long is to be consummated ; but since we are human we cannot but be acutely conscious that this is the last Assembly Sunday of the Old Kirk of Scotland as we, its children, have known it. It is inevitable that there should be stirred within us a very deep emotion. Memories come thronging back upon us, memories of things that are precious to our souls, and we feel ourselves encompassed by a ghostly cloud of witnesses.

Some of us cannot but view with regretful anticipation the impending passing away for ever of a part of our inherited and cherished traditions, and the coming of a partial disturbance of that familiar ecclesiastical atmosphere that we have known and greatly loved. It would be insincere to underestimate or gloss over this aspect of the situation. It is only natural so to feel, and our brethren who are about to unite with us must be entertaining very similar emotions. But it is at the foot of the Cross that we find such sentiments properly

adjusted in a true scale of valuation. We cannot fail to distinguish between principle and prejudice as we look at Him who hangs upon it and realise what the disruptive folly and sin of man have done.

If, to secure this great achievement along the paths of Christian unity, this high example to the world, some things have had to be sacrificed which our personal preference would rather have retained, let us try to keep our heads cool enough and our hearts warm enough to remember that if this is all we are asked to contribute towards the coming of Christ's kingdom it is little enough from those who owe so much. "That they all may be one ; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." How infinitely remote are our controversies and our differences from the yearning spirit of that prayer !

And let us not forget that we have not ended but have only begun the work which God in His providence has given us to do. To Scottish presbyterians, more than to any other communion, must fall the responsibility of discovering a way of concord with those children of the Reformation who are still divided from us. Is it too much to prophesy that the reunited Church of Scotland, possessed of doctrinal standards and an historic ecclesiastical order which have commanded the respect of Christendom, will yet find her destiny, through a wise and intermediate position, in being the mediatrix of an incorporating union or federation which will give a British Church to the English-speaking world ? If that indeed be so, if that be the gift that our succeeding race will ultimately lay at the feet of the God and Father of us all, then we are now engaged not merely in cementing an outward ecclesiastical organisation, but in laying the foundations of an enduring temple of moral and spiritual beauty in which, long ages hence, an ennobled mankind will greatly magnify the Lord, even when these ancient walls which now surround us have crumbled and are gone.

The future will have its own problems and its own difficulties. We need not be dismayed. We shall walk on our way in safety if we can but make this prayer our own : " O sacred heart of Jesus ! O precious wounds of Christ ! teach us to seek the paths of peace, and teach these hearts of ours to love."

ADDRESS AT THE THANKSGIVING SERVICE
FOR THE RECOVERY OF HIS MAJESTY
THE KING

St. Giles' Cathedral, Sunday Morning, 7th July 1929

THERE come moments when, under the influence of unusually solemnising circumstances, we find ourselves sufficiently mellowed and impressed to be able to estimate the values of life with a greater reliability of judgment than we normally exercise. Longfellow, for instance, never was unaffected by the twilight. He found that it compelled him to think of his friends only to regret that he had not served and loved them better, and to remember his enemies only to forgive them. And too in the experience of nations occasions arise when the multifarious activities of a community are so overshadowed and impressed by a common obsession that the whole body of the people seems blended into one individual entity. Times of triumph or of calamity, as we have all observed, throw into brilliant relief the solidarity of a nation.

Fifteen years ago we had a striking illustration of the fact that, however individual the lives of men may be, however self-centred and self-preservative, the children of a common race can from their diverse spheres and divided fields of competitive toil flow together into a genuine brotherhood, one in heart, in purpose, and in idealism. And there is nothing more moving in human life than when this recognition of mutual interest directs a nation to a public acknowledgment of Almighty God, and of the utter and complete dependence of man,

who of himself can do nothing, upon His wisdom, power, and goodness.

And such is what we witnessed in this Cathedral that grey December afternoon eight months ago when here assembled a vast concourse of all sorts and conditions of men and women, representative of every section of the community, to plead with God on behalf of their beloved King. Over the whole land lay the gloom of a dread anxiety. Day by day the bulletins were deepening in the gravity both of what they said and of what they did not say. An Empire was listening with bated breath as each recurring message was flashed through the ether to the furthestmost limits of the earth. The thoughts of millions, in this and in every land, were concentrated on the shadowed sick-room in Buckingham Palace where His Majesty the King, worn with fever and exhaustion, was gallantly fighting for his life against the sinister encroachments of a severe and critical illness.

During these dark and uncertain days, when the fate of one who has drawn to himself the love and reverence of his people seemed to be hanging precariously in the balance, we learned again something of that family spirit, that domestic loyalty, which at all times ought to be the characteristics of a Christian nation, but which in our social, political, and religious relationships we so often repudiate and profane. We became one with our neighbours at least in our anxieties—and they were very real—in our hopes, and in our prayers. For a while we ceased to be an aggregate of isolated individualists. We were one body with one soul. We had been united by our fears and by the strength of our common affection for one beloved person whose precious life seemed threatened.

And now once more this morning the nation stands unified. On this occasion, however, it is unified in a great thanksgiving.

The crisis which oppressed us is overpast. The

brooding clouds that hung so heavily have been dispelled. The King, restored to health and strength, is back once more at the post of duty, and the whole Empire rejoices. "*Non nobis, Domine!*" That is our attitude to-day. "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name be glory!" It is a profound and inspiring thought that on this day, in great minster and in lonely country church throughout the length and breadth of His Majesty's wide dominions, his subjects are assembling in humble and grateful recognition of the ways of God, to render thanks for the restoration of a dearly-loved Sovereign to his subjects, to pray that that influential life which through the divine blessing has been thus prolonged may be dedicated once more to the service of the Empire and this people.

"He asked life of thee and thou gavest it him. . . . Return unto thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee."

Such an experience as that through which we have recently passed in connection with His Majesty's serious illness cannot be without its effect upon the national mind and character. Some understood, as they had never understood before, the sacredness and strength of those ties of affection and loyalty that bind King George to the hearts of his people. Others, who had been misled into false and superficial thinking by the windy words of foolish persons, awoke to a surprised realisation of the living spirit of robust and sober patriotism, of devotion to our country, its welfare and its best traditions, that underlies all the disturbances of our everyday life. And yet others still were stirred and impressed by the dramatic demonstration of how deep, responsive, and sincere the public sympathy can be, and found their cynical views concerning men in the mass not a little chastened and subdued. Moreover, there were not a few who were possibly a little too apt to indulge freely in unconsidered epithets about what

they chose to call a godless age, and who were awed into silence as they heard the prayers of a large proportion of the civilised world rising like incense to the throne of God.

“No chastening,” says St. Paul, “for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous ; nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.” From that chastening which our nation received in the anxiety and perturbation of mind to which it was thus submitted during many dragging and unsettled weeks, it is to be hoped that we have all acquired a deeper sense of our membership one of another, and a more true appreciation of the things that bind us each to each and all to all. As we watched by the bedside of our King, perhaps we learned something of the brotherliness and concord which should knit together those of the same household, whether domestic or national, and something too of our common reliance, in life and in death, upon the God and Father of us all. Often indeed has one seen families, broken and divided by sordid jealousies, mean squabbles, and petty discord, harmonised and at peace again by the fact that in the agony of human helplessness they found themselves standing together beside the sick-bed of some loved one.

So too may this nation have learned wisdom by the bedside of its King.

In the providence of God, whose purposes are wise and whose ways are good, who grants the gift of life and takes it when He will, there has been given back to us a Sovereign on whom and with just cause there has in an almost unsurpassed measure been lavished the love and loyalty of his people. The close of the Great War witnessed the collapse of many thrones which seemed secure as the earth itself. Crowns which had symbolised political power and majesty were torn from the heads of kings by mobs of frenzied revolutionaries. But the close of the war witnessed also the throne of

this Empire emerging from the blood-red mists of the world-conflict enhaloed in a new splendour and buttressed by a popular enthusiasm on foundations more stable and permanent than its history had ever known. The historian of a future age will certainly count among the prime reasons for this significant and arresting situation the fact that George v. was throughout these critical years the king who sat upon that throne.

A man to whom duty is the very breath of existence, to whom the welfare of his people is his chief and constant concern, he is the very embodiment of honour, justice, candour, sympathetic understanding, and simple fidelity. With unaffected earnestness he has consistently endeavoured to be worthy of his royal office. The Crown throughout his reign has been the concrete representation of that high political idealism which has held the widely-scattered Commonwealth of Free Nations that forms our Empire in a unity whose strength lies in that it is more moral and spiritual than political.

But indeed the Crown has been far more than that. In King George it has stood for everything that by our best traditions is recognised as lofty and of good repute, as its wearer himself has been the personification of what a kindly straightforward British gentleman should be, and his home what a good and gracious British home should be.

"The people," said Claudian of old, "are fashioned according to the example of their king; and edicts are of less power than the model which his life exhibits." Men can never quite adequately appreciate the significance of the present; and it will be another generation than our own which will fully recognise all that King George and Queen Mary have effected by their personal example upon the manners and habits of their age, for whose moral stability the character of its rulers was of paramount and vital import. May the life which has been spared to us, so great and far-reaching in its

influence, be long preserved to be a further blessing on this nation, and through this nation and its growth in righteousness on all the nations of the earth.

And may we, in this hour of returning gladness, not permit ourselves to forget the lessons of the days of anxiety that have passed ; nor, having asked of God in our time of trouble, allow ourselves to be careless in our gratitude when mercy is bestowed.

“ Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil. Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children.”

THE UNION OF THE SCOTTISH CHURCHES

*Address delivered in the Music Hall, Aberdeen,
24th October 1929*

I

I THANK you for the honour you have done me in inviting me here to address you on this occasion. It is a privilege to take part in these Union celebrations in the city of Aberdeen. Your ecclesiastical traditions are illustrious. You stand in a long line of honourable succession from St. Machar and Bishop Elphinstone to those intellectual princes of your own times, William Robertson Smith and George Adam Smith, names revered throughout the world.

In Scottish church affairs you Aberdonians have played a notable part. You have consistently followed your own independent line. Throughout your history you have never been content placidly to accept the enthusiasms of majorities, and certainly you have often proved dour and intractable as regards the official policies of Edinburgh ! My great predecessor in St. Giles', John Knox, after his disputation in 1561 with the Aberdeen divines, was, I do not say a wiser, but probably a surprised and somewhat disconcerted man. The south has often been opposed by you, thwarted by you, and not infrequently thoroughly annoyed with you ; but it early learned to respect and to appreciate Aberdeen as a factor which had got to be reckoned with. The Aberdonian has always known his own mind and stubbornly stood by his own view of things.

And further, it would be churlish did I fail gratefully to acknowledge the debt which Edinburgh owes to you.

It was James Lawson who, as successor to Knox, "after long reasoning" left your noble Cathedral of St. Machar in 1572 for the pulpit of St. Giles', and who, influenced no doubt by the memory of King's College in whose shadow he had lived, was mainly instrumental in founding the University of Edinburgh.

Scotland has indeed owed much to the cultured clerical principals of her universities. In more recent times two of them have had a peculiar share in bringing to pass the event which to-night we celebrate. Their share was not spectacular, but lay in the hidden depths of spiritual influence and power. John Caird of Glasgow, more than any other man of his generation, broke through the barricades of separation in presbyterian Scotland and opened up the way to that better understanding which made the Union negotiations between the churches ultimately possible. And you, sir,¹ if I may be pardoned this personal reference, during your long and distinguished career have so impressed men of varied communions by your gracious bearing and generous attitude and outlook on ecclesiastical affairs, that they learned through you, who have in truth belonged to all the churches, to forget their differences and to appreciate how good and pleasant a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.

II

This public meeting has been organised to celebrate the Union of the two great branches of Scottish Presbyterianism. It is always extraordinarily difficult for men to appreciate the real significance of contemporary events ; but we have in fact been witnesses this month of the most outstanding and far-reaching episode in Scottish history since the Revolution Settlement of 1690.

¹ The Very Rev. Sir George Adam Smith, Principal of Aberdeen University, who presided.

One cannot but be profoundly impressed by the deep feelings which the Union has stirred in the hearts not only of church people but of those who have little or no connection with organised religion. It seems to be the earnest hope of every right-minded man, irrespective of denominational allegiance, that this Union is going to exercise a widespread and beneficent influence upon the moral and spiritual life of Scotland. It has been that hope that has inspired the labours of the last twenty years of negotiation. It has enabled men to sink their personal preferences, to revise their attitude to many cherished privileges, and has broken down the barriers of prejudice and thrown a highway across the morasses of separatism and misunderstanding. It is that hope which, over obstacles which at first to many of us seemed insuperable, has brought us in triumph and thanksgiving to this hour.

The responsibility for its fulfilment now lies with us. If our generation fails adequately to face this responsibility, it will have a heavy account to settle at the bar of history.

Let us briefly review the situation that confronts us. First, we may consider the general situation.

III

We live in an age which in its language is somewhat addicted to the use of the superlative degree. The mantle of the prophet appears to have fallen upon the shoulders of the pessimist, who can see but little hope of restoration in the creaking fabric of a discredited civilisation which is steadily sinking into disrepute. Dr. Henry Sloane Coffin, in a remarkable speech at the United Assembly in Edinburgh a fortnight ago, seemed to indicate that in his view Christendom, as we have understood the term, had disappeared, and that the Christian society was now represented by a small minority of persons living

in a secular and hostile civilisation. The thoughts of the Bishop of Durham seem to be working in the same direction.

One cannot, however, accept this sort of thing without serious reservations. I cannot speak for conditions in America, but as regards our own country such a statement is definitely misleading. I decline to believe that the social and religious life of Scotland is as unrelievedly black as some are inclined to paint it, though at the same time we are forced to admit that it has problems which are critical and grave and which call for the earnest consideration of all Christian people. We have a churchless million in our midst, demonstrating the fact that the Church is undoubtedly without the allegiance of masses of the people, especially in our great centres of congested industrialism. They are indifferent to, or in active rebellion against, the Christian gospel because they do not understand it ; and in this we cannot fail to recognise that somehow we have not succeeded in spiritualising the expanding life of the industrial era.

This situation, however, while deplorable and sufficiently serious, is not new. The statistics which Dr. Chalmers produced some ninety years ago as a result of his searching investigations into the religious life of Scotland were largely similar to those which confront us to-day ; only they were, on the whole, a little worse.

One result, and a melancholy result, of our divisions has been that our ecclesiastical machinery has proved itself ineffective. Our rivalries resulted in a disgraceful over-staffing of our rural parishes, while the urban parishes with their teeming populations have been left hopelessly undermanned. There is nothing that so condemns our past separation, now happily ended, as the startling fact that owing to the unnecessary multiplication of rival ministers throughout the country districts the majority of the clergy are to-day ministering to a small minority of the population of Scotland.

It is not only in the industrial areas, however, that indifference to organised religion is alarmingly apparent. Among the comfortable and prosperous sections of the community, which are becoming increasingly secular in outlook, the same disregard for the ordinances of the Church is in evidence, and with very much less excuse. Many people, of course, as regards their religion are intellectually indolent. They are averse to doing any thinking on the larger issues of life, and somehow or other religious instruction seems to have fallen into the background. How far the blame for this should be apportioned between the Church, the school, and the home is of course a matter which can be argued.

But at all events there is a widespread and shocking ignorance of elementary Christian truth which renders it difficult to secure in social and national affairs a practical application of the moral precepts of Christ. The Bible to-day is not much read, and I think a considerable proportion of the regular churchgoing population, if not the majority, would be hard put to it to make a respectable appearance at a simple examination on the life and teaching of Christ and the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith. The result of all which is that the attitude of many modern Christians when called upon to apply the mind of their Master to the social, economic, and political affairs of our times is largely the bewilderment of Pilate, "What shall I do with this Jesus?" They thus can make but a poor show when faced with the attacks of the sceptic and the growing menace of secularism.

The grim pressure of these and other circumstances is opening the eyes of organised religion to the disastrous effect of ecclesiastical divisions that sap its vigour and undermine its strength, and so largely invalidate its pacific appeals to a truculent and squabbling democracy, which, and not without reason, retorts that the Church had better practise what it preaches.

In the mind of every thinking man there is rising the

conviction that, though the Church may justly venerate its history and revere its traditions, ecclesiastical patriotism is not enough. The mind of God wills the fellowship of His people. One act of Christian charity arrests the thought of mankind more than the dignified pronouncements of a hundred conferences ; and the Union of the Scottish Church, with all its evidence of genuine readiness on both sides to sacrifice for the common good much that is dear, ought to do more to uplift the moral and spiritual life of this nation than any political or social programme that could be devised by the mind of man.

IV

As we have seen, the Church undoubtedly has its own problems to face in this generation. But some people who are none too adept at seeing things in their true proportions, when forced to contemplate the difficulties of our own times throw up their hands in despair and cast their eyes back with yearning regret to what they call the good old days. There is, for instance, much talk on the part of many who ought to know better of the Church of Scotland returning through this Union to her pristine glory. When was this pristine glory ? I, for one, must confess that I do not know.

Let us be done with such nonsense. It is spiritually enervating, and is destructive of initiative, faith, and energy. There were no days in the past so good as our own, however depressed and indifferent the standard of our own may be ; and there has been no glory of the Church comparable to the glory that now is hers, though that glory still be very dim indeed. Those who talk otherwise are ignorant of history. The Church to-day, despite the fact that it is carrying on its work among a population which is so largely non-church-going, occupies a place of esteem and affection in the life of the Scottish people which in spite of all

our troubles and all our shortcomings is quite unparalleled.

Show me an era to which we may unfavourably compare our own. There is none. Show me any period when the Church of Scotland stood forth as consecrated in her purpose, broad in vision, tolerant in outlook, organised and united in her forces, and vitally conscious of her true mission to Scotland, and not to Scotland only but to the whole world, as she does at this hour. You cannot. Indeed, we are only now entering into the promised land of spiritual power and liberty of which the more enlightened of our Reformation leaders dreamed. All else has been but disordered transition and a protracted and painful process of readjustment. This—though, God knows, it leaves much to be desired—is the greatest age of Scottish ecclesiastical history. We should thank God that we live in it!

Look back. To what conditions of our Protestant past would you desire to return? Do you see aught in the stormy history of these last four hundred years for which you would barter your present heritage? Would you go back, as an improvement on the present, to the Reformation era with its sound and fury, its violence and disputations, its fierce clash of secular and religious interests, and Knox himself, the leader of the Kirk, harassed and bewildered by the conflicting issues of his urgently necessary but terrific task, uncertain, speaking with two voices, swinging from policy to policy, doubtful even to the last where to build his final citadel, and entangled with and thwarted by those Lords of the Congregation among whom, so he bitterly declared, there was not one righteous man? That surely was not a Golden Age for those who sought the ways of religious peace and the calm of spiritual security.

From 1557, when the Reformation dawned with the first real articulate protest against the corruptions of Rome and a demand for the introduction of the English Prayer-Book, there was no appearance of stability till

1638, and very little then. There was nothing but a seething ferment caused by the rise and fall of rival parties, the disconcerting ups and downs of the see-saw of contending ecclesiastical factions—Andrew Melville determined to create a presbyterian theocracy, and King James as determined to assume dictatorship over the Church and foist episcopacy upon the Scottish people ; and the whole nation was distracted from the appreciation of true religion by a fanatical absorption with envenomed political and religious disputes.

And afterwards ? The Golden Age eludes us still, though the presbyterians have won the day. There come more collisions between Church and King, the lurid flames of sullen religious antagonisms, the establishment of ecclesiastical tyranny, the horrors of civil war, the country held in the relentless grip of iron bondage ; and Alexander Henderson himself, the protagonist of the Solemn League and Covenant, wearied of the turmoil and anxieties of his troubled life, declaring on his deathbed that “ there never was a schoolboy more anxious to have the play than I am to take leave of this world.” Would you like to go back to all that ?

In 1661 the bishops came back, and with them a savage and bloody era. There came the hideous and merciless persecution of the Covenanters, the hunting and harrying of men, women, and children over bog and moor and mountain, the bloody slaughters and dark exploits of the minions of Claverhouse and Dalziel of the Binns. Nor can we forget that the spirit of the Covenant itself was not always a flawless crystal, and deeds were done under the Blue Banner which we will be wise not to call from oblivion. If we must judge men and their outlook by the standards of their times, as in justice we ought, let us have the common-sense to be thankful that these times were not our own.

The Revolution Settlement of 1690 will disappoint our expectations too. The presbyterian system was finally established as the government of Christ's Kirk

in Scotland by the general consent of the nation ; but I for one resent its attendant atmosphere being compared with that which now I am privileged to breathe. The purging of the Kirk and the "rabbling" of the episcopal clergy were pursued by the returning presbyterians with such unrestrained enthusiasm that Parliament, to the Church's humiliation, was compelled in 1693 to intervene and impose upon a resentful General Assembly a policy of toleration embodied in its "Act for settling the Quiet and Peace of the Church." These old days were not good days ! Though six hundred of the episcopal clergy were ousted, some three hundred remained firmly entrenched in their livings and stubbornly supported by their people. Of these some eventually conformed to Presbyterianism, and others to the State ; but many conformed to neither, and till the end of the second decade of the eighteenth century the presbyterian ministers sent to supplant them, or to succeed them on their death, were in parish after parish violently assaulted and driven out with sticks and stones.

Indeed, the eighteenth century can hardly fail to disconcert our reactionaries ! It presents a sorry picture of the religious life of Scotland, and the kirk session records show a dismal picture of its manners and its morals. The presbyteries and kirk sessions exercised a ruthless and unimaginative domination over the life of the people, and the stern suppression of natural and innocent exuberance of spirit drove it underground, where it found outlet in sinister and vicious ways. The protagonists of episcopacy and presbytery, to the great detriment of true religion, carried on a vituperative pamphlet controversy, the authors of which, on both sides, Lord Macaulay with some justification tersely dismissed as "habitual liars." During the first half of the century the proceedings of the General Assembly in Edinburgh were such that it was regarded by the young men about town as a place of diversion whither, so we are told, they gaily resorted to listen with cynical

hilarity to the controversial arguments of "legal" and "evangelical" divines. It was not really until the latter half of the eighteenth century that the spirit of Christian tolerance began for the first time to appear above the horizon of Scottish ecclesiastical life. Were these, then, the days of the Church's pristine glory?

With the nineteenth century we are more familiar. Not one of us could wish it back. Its first half brought the catastrophe of the Disruption of the Scottish Church and a harvest of incredible hatred and bitterness which we all want to forget. Its latter half is blotted and smeared by ecclesiastical feuds, disestablishment campaigns, religious and intellectual obscurantism, and heresy hunts, all of which have left but dreary memories. Indeed, as regards its theological outlook, a century has a heavy score run up against it which deposed John M'Leod Campbell and David MacRae, expelled Robertson Smith from his chair, and attacked and vilified Tulloch, Caird, and Norman MacLeod as heretics and perverters of the faith.

No ; let us desist from this foolish worship of the past, this baseless despair of the present. Our task is not to swathe the mummies of the vanished centuries with the fanciful garments of unreal romance. It is falsification of the truth, it is a repudiation of the light. Through much tribulation we have come unto this hour. At the same time let us remember that, while absorption in ecclesiastical politics and doctrinal controversies is no evidence of real religion, nor does it betoken that the Kingdom of God is at hand, each troubled era was not without its good and saintly representatives, for God never leaves Himself without a witness. The spirits of many just and wise and holy men shine forth like constellations from these darkened skies. And it is also true that the tempestuous history of the Scottish Church bears witness on the part of the people to a deep interest in the Church's weal, a passionate regard for religious liberty, and a determination in defiance of the inter-

ference of secular authority that the Kirk of Christ should have a pure and democratic constitution. Dr. John White, whose place in Scottish ecclesiastical history posterity will assign among the greater builders of Presbyterianism, referred in his moderatorial address to the united Assembly in Edinburgh at the beginning of this month to "our troubled but glorious past." "We are joint-heirs," he said, "in all that this history transmits, in its guilt and shame and in its grandeurs of faith and sacrifice." Indeed we must remember both these aspects; but as we survey the past and the present, we cannot but know that our fathers were in the shadows, and that we are in the dawn!

v

We have considered our present difficulties, but there is another side to the picture which is inspiring in its suggestion of the opportunity which lies ahead of our United Church. There is manifested often in most unexpected quarters a disposition which is quite remarkable to give the Gospel of Christ a fair if critical hearing. Even in the camps of those who are avowedly hostile to organised Christianity there is displayed not a little which is more Christian than we are apt to admit, and which when sympathetically treated is astonishingly responsive. Though humanity, in General Smuts' famous phrase, may have struck its tents and be on the march away from the old ethical, political, and religious positions, it is definitely out on the search for something. Can the Church direct it on its way?

The secret of much of our unrest is that the modern mind is determined to find reality. It is passionately intolerant of insincerity and sham. Much of the criticism of the Church—whether it be justifiable criticism is another matter—is that it has offered to men a good deal that has been unreal in its teaching, its worship, and its organisation. We need not resent this

criticism. Indeed, it is the hope of the Church that to-day it is being submitted to the searching rays of the critic. An age which rightly or wrongly is impatient with its settled ecclesiastical order is never wholly irreligious. Beneath all human agitation there burns the thirst for the divine.

We can only begin to understand the social and intellectual chaos of our times if we remember that humanity's eras of unrest are due, to an extent far deeper than we recognise, to a spiritual dissatisfaction which contains its own infinite possibilities. The wearied gropings of a disillusioned age are the great opportunity of the Christian Church. The pulpit will always be a power when with understanding of and sympathy for man's needs and frailties it sincerely and bravely proclaims the saving power of Christ.

We need men fired with the spirit of crusaders to man our pulpits. I can conceive of no call to youth to-day which offers wider fields of opportunity and service, a greater sphere of influence, a stronger appeal to heroism, or a more noble or chivalrous object to which to dedicate the gifts of intellect and heart, than the call of the ministry of the Church. If a young man is on the look-out for work which will demand all that he has of vision, humanity, romance, and daring, he will find it there.

Across the stage of Scotland's troubled history there walk the figures of princes, warriors, and statesmen, but nowhere has the robust character of the Scottish race been more in evidence than in that Geneva gown, which, despite its faults and failings, many of which cost religion dear, has taught and served the people, guarded their rights and privileges, fought the battles of religious and political freedom, and stood unafraid before potentates and kings.

Never before in its history has the presbyterian ministry been called to a greater task or more splendid opportunity than await it to-day. The forces of the

spiritual and the purely secular interpretation of life and the universe are clearly massing themselves for combat, but the future is aglow with hope if the Church can find the men. The masses will listen to those who by their qualities of mind and heart can show themselves to possess some right to speak to their fellow-men about the things of God. The masses will listen because they want to hear. Men never rest permanently satisfied with the husks of the wilderness. They want security and they want to find a spiritual home, for God has planted eternity in their hearts.

I am convinced that, in spite of all that is depressing in the religious situation of the country, the Holy Spirit is abroad in the land to-day. If it were not so we would not be here to-night, no longer divided but united. Only the power of the Holy Ghost could have softened our hearts and so removed our obstinate prejudices as to make this Union possible. There is a stirring in the valley of the dry bones. The more I read of history, the more I am convinced that at times there comes to men and nations the gift of shining opportunity from the providence of God. In eras of disorder, like a lightning flash, there comes a fresh illumination of the way that leads men unto life. In the union of our Churches such an experience has come again to Scotland.

If in the past there have been failures on the part of the Church to live up to its confessed ideals, it has been a failure on the part of its united membership—a personal failure on the part of hundreds of thousands of individuals who share the same faith, the same Christian conception of human life as a sphere of love and service, and who profess their own responsibility in the priesthood of all believers. If the Church of Scotland is adequately to rise to all that is offered it in this new day, it can only be by a determination on the part of each one of its members themselves to rise to a new loyalty in faith and conduct, and to a fresh and

humbler recognition of all that God requires of men and women who name the name of Christ.

There is a tide in the affairs of men
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune.

Another of these moments has arrived in the religious history of Scotland.

VI

May I now make a few observations on what we may call the particular situation?

Though the separation of eighty-five years is ended, the future has to be consolidated and will contain its own difficulties. Two Churches have united which, though alike, have nevertheless had their own distinctive characteristics. The Church of Scotland and the United Free Church maintained the same standards of doctrine, order of ministry, and ecclesiastical organisation, but inevitably each Church tended to produce a particular atmosphere and temperament. You may unite two outward organisations by an Act of Assembly, but the blending of two atmospheres and temperaments is another and a more delicate matter. This is our especial task, and we cannot do it of ourselves but only by the power of the Holy Spirit working in us.

We are each bringing into the Union our own traditions. On either side many of these traditions are of value. Others could be sacrificed without loss. We must learn, as we adjust ourselves to this new situation, to exercise a wise discrimination between principle and prejudice. There is ample room for the preservation of principle, but in this day which the Lord hath made there is no room for the preservation of the obscurantism of reactionaries and bigots. Presbyterianism has suffered intolerably from the petty-minded and stubborn obstructionist, and it is time that we got rid of him.

The coming years will demand of each one of us all the sympathy, forbearance, and understanding we

possess as we earnestly seek to appreciate each other's attitude and point of view. Those who, from slavish addiction to catchwords, unimportant trifles, and selfish personal preferences which are of no vital moment, refuse to exercise these most urgent and necessary Christian qualities will be traitors to the cause to which God in our day has clearly called the people of this nation. Principle is quite another matter. But we are not likely to hold any principle of real importance which has not been conserved and embodied in this scheme of Union towards whose construction the collective mind of the Church has been applied for almost a quarter of a century.

It is to be hoped that in the Union neither Church will wholly lose its individuality or suffer its peculiar witness to be lost. We have each much to give the other, and to the reunited Church of Scotland will be afforded the opportunity of continuing in an ampler and richer life the highest qualities evolved in the experience of her two great and hitherto divided branches.

We must prepare ourselves for many changes. Change is inevitable. It is also eminently desirable. Much that is hallowed by ancient custom and firmly established in our affections will have to be drastically remodelled, and much that is entirely new will have to be introduced. The divided Church in Scotland has not been meeting the national needs. We cannot go on as we have been doing. Our entire ecclesiastical machinery is destined to be overhauled and not a little of it, let us hope, to be scrapped. We are out to evolve an organisation which will be best fitted and most adequately equipped to carry the gospel and ordinances of Christ to the people of Scotland.

It may be that circumstances will necessitate some innovations of a very far-reaching character. Already, for instance, in many quarters voices are raised demanding that the Church must seriously give its

consideration to the introduction, or rather the restoration, of Superintendents. This demand, from which some people may instinctively recoil before giving it due consideration, is likely to increase and not to decrease in strength and insistence. Presbyteries have often proved cumbrous, slow, and ineffective in the exercise of many of their functions. Their general enlargement owing to the Union is not calculated to increase their efficiency as supervisory and disciplinary courts. More effective superintendence, whether vested in an individual or in a body of individuals, is long overdue, and how to attain it is a question which the Church of Scotland will have resolutely to face.

If a dispassionate consideration of existing circumstances should eventually point to the fact that the welfare of the Church would be best served by the restoration of the office of Superintendent to the presbyterian system, let us prepare to consider the issue without prejudice. Above all, let us clear our historical horizon. Such a policy, whatever we may think of it, cannot be resisted on the grounds that it would in any way violate essential presbyterian principle or run counter to any Scriptural injunction. No loyal presbyterian would care to repudiate John Knox, but to him the theory of a rigid clerical equality was unknown. The aim of Knox was to make Scotland Protestant and free, and to this end his presbyterian policy was without prejudice and elastic. In fact, the Presbyterianism of his day, with its system of Superintendents, combined with our present organisation the more valuable elements of a limited episcopacy. The doctrine of the parity of the clergy was initiated by Andrew Melville, who himself, as Dr. Cunningham said, could brook no master, and possibly considered that competitors for his supremacy would be less numerous if he were content to rule as *primus inter pares*. Though still existing in our Church in theory, it has long ceased in practice. We have abolished one hierarchy but have

created another consisting of such persons as Moderators, Royal Chaplains, Conveners of Assembly Committees, and Doctors of Divinity, on some of whom, moreover, we have freely bestowed distinctive titles.

Presbyterians of all shades of opinion, however, will be united on one cardinal point. The introduction of Superintendents could be considered only if such officers were themselves to be subject to the jurisdiction of the courts of the Church. There is a good deal to be said for permanent Moderators of Synods, relieved from pastoral work for the oversight of their synodical area ; but as regards their essential status in our ecclesiastical order, they must be no more than presbyters presiding over their fellows, by their fellows' free will and consent, and under their collective direction and control. Presbyterianism could not, without repudiating itself, permit an imitation of the monarchical bishop to supersede its hierarchy of courts.

Those who are conversant with ecclesiastical affairs are well aware that the clergy are as much in need of guidance, counsel, and supervision in the exercise of their duties as any other body of fallible men. Many a young parson is acutely sensible of the loneliness and isolation which are involved in the lack of any official advisor or director to whom in his many problems he can turn. The demand for the restoration of the Superintendent, whether we agree with it or not, arises from a real sense of need. Call him what you will, there is urgent necessity for some liaison officer between the parochial clergy and the courts of the Church. There are men who would do splendid service in a wider sphere who are left where they are, their many capacities unused, because there is none to bring them forward. And not a few square pegs in round holes, who in other environment would find their true opportunity, remain to play ducks-and-drakes with a charge for which they are wholly unsuited, though they act with the best intentions in the world. We had better

begin to think about all this, for we shall doubtless hear more of it ere long.

Our need is for the spirit of courage and adventure even if its exercise necessitates the surrender of some things we personally hold dear. It will not be easy, for example, to witness the turning of the key in the door of that sacred building where we were baptized and where we first lisped our childhood's words of adoration. But for the better efficiency of the Church, and therefore for the glory of God, this sort of thing must frequently happen, and only blind and selfish folly could oppose it. The Union would be a piece of grotesque mockery were the Church not at once to endeavour to remove the anomaly, wherever it exists, of two ministers doing the work of one, and one minister condemned to a task that would tax the strength of half a dozen. The staffing of our town charges must be seriously reconsidered, and the attitude of our people towards an "assistant" minister will require to be revolutionised. This is one of our first responsibilities, and of course in facing it we may expect to find prejudice strongly entrenched. But our man-power must be redistributed if the united Church is to justify either its union or its existence.

May I suggest to the laity that, as they rejoice in this great Union, they should earnestly consider whether even in the Church, where the clergy are supposed to be endowed with some power of financial magic which can make a clerical shilling go as far as a layman's sovereign, the labourer is not worthy of his hire? I do not refer wholly to the disgrace of our smaller livings, but also to the position of the ministers of prominent charges who have to endure the burden of many calls and expenses and who are paid stipends that no young professional man of a few years' standing would look at. No clergyman wants to be rich. He only asks for a mind free from financial care to devote to his work and to the interests of his people.

VII

We will now, I trust, in our united strength and purpose devote ourselves to these and other matters. We have removed from our midst a great reproach and have laid one stone securely in that Temple of Human Brotherhood which through much pain and travail humanity is slowly building. At last among the hills of vision we have succeeded in healing the discord of our native Church and have found a place where Ephraim has ceased to envy Judah, and Judah will no more vex Ephraim. Whatever may be the mutual gain to each contracting party to this Union—and the mutual gain is incalculable—nothing approaches in spiritual value the fact that henceforth the Church of Scotland can hold up the Cross before the belligerent masses of mankind without being put to an open shame.

In this time of joy and gratitude we will be wise to remember that we have not ended but only begun the work that God in His providence has given us to do. The reunited Church of Scotland will dominate the religious life of this country. Nowhere throughout the Protestant world will there be in evidence a communion so truly and in fact a National Church. Triumphant ecclesiastical majorities, however, have their own dangers. They can be very cruel and intolerant. They are apt to be inconsiderate of the existence of small minorities, and also to acquire an exaggerated idea of their own importance. It is our Christian duty to remember that Scotland after all is not the whole world, and that the Church which we love is but a province of the great Catholic Church of God.

We have Christian obligations towards others who may not think as we do. Into this Union which we have consummated the remnants of our Scottish Israel must be gathered in, if not by ourselves, yet by succeeding generations who from our example have learned that the noblest task to which they can apply them-

selves is to rebuild the broken walls of Zion. There are children of the Scottish Reformation, bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, who remain yet divided from us, and in some cases, unfortunately, acutely divided. There are, for instance, may I say in all brotherly sympathy for their own individual principles, the United Free Church (Continuing), the Free Church of Scotland, the Church of the Secession, the Reformed Presbyterians, and the Free Presbyterians. There is also the Scottish Episcopal Church.

Our own generation will probably be sufficiently occupied in cementing the Union which we have accomplished, but we can at least explore the ways of concord with our brethren who are outwith our own particular fold. There is a future beyond our little day, and we ought to live and work in the faith that in Scotland the prayer of our Lord will in God's own time be answered, and they all will be one at last. Let us go forward with our eyes on the far horizon and our ears alert to catch the whisper of the Holy Spirit, remembering that peace and charity alone are beautiful.

An unknown country lies ahead of us. We have not passed this way heretofore. There will be sharp corners of conflicting opinion to negotiate, there will be swollen rivers of prejudice to be crossed, there may be precipices and chasms on the way. These need not dismay us. Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth passeth over before you into Jordan !

SERMON ON THE COMMEMORATION OF
THE BLESSED DEAD

*Preached in St. Giles' Cathedral, Sunday Morning,
3rd November 1929*

If a man die, shall he live again?—*Job* xiv. 14.

As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness : I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.—*Psalms* xvii. 15.

I

As some people have occasionally to be reminded that Christmas Day is not merely an excuse for feasting and elaborate domestic festivities, but is primarily the commemoration of the most stupendous episode in human history, namely the birth of Jesus Christ, so others stand in like need of having it recalled to them that Hallowe'en is not adequately observed by guisers, turnip-lanterns, and ducking for apples, since in the Christian calendar it is the eve of All Hallows, or All Saints, when the Church Catholic remembers with solemnity and reverence the blessed dead and the Christian hope of everlasting life. It is one of our curious religious inconsistencies that many of us would with alacrity attend a Hallowe'en party with all its pagan rites and survivals, who would pay but scant if any attention to the season's religious significance with its uplifting atmosphere of communion and fellowship with those who have put on immortality.

Personally, I would sincerely regret to see the purely secular festivities associated with such seasons disappearing. A number of our modern intellectuals are now on the warpath against our traditional periodic

incursions into the realm of phantasy. Fairy tales, we are informed, are apt to produce disastrous effects upon the impressionable minds of children, whose training and instruction should all be couched in terms of cold reality. Even Santa Klaus himself is threatened ! Some of us, however, who find an occasional escape from stark reality a welcome experience, will continue to risk its psychological dangers. A Hallowe'en party amid the romping of children is a salutary experience for more mature Christians who are apt to take themselves a little too seriously and to forget what it was like to be young. Moreover, it is beneficial for us by innocent association with pagan survivals to be reminded of the childhood of the race and to have emphasised our kinship with the past and the continuity of human development.

At the same time we ought first and before all else to recognise the profound religious truth enshrined in such seasons, and some of us have cause to take ourselves to task in these matters and to revise our estimate of what is involved in our religious duties. For three centuries Scotland was misled in its blind rejection of symbolism in worship and the observance of sacred festivals. We must remember, however, that such an attitude towards the more mellow aspects of religious practice was not native to this nation's character. It was imposed upon it by alien influences, such as English Puritanism ; but having taken root, it flourished in a wild and stubborn reaction against the high-handed and meddling policy of interfering kings. To-day, happily, the tide is on the turn, and the Scottish Church is reclaiming for its worship and devotional exercises that which always was, and is, its own.

II

Our thoughts this morning instinctively turn to those dear to us who have accomplished their warfare and

finished their course. They are also occupied with the greater future and our own survival after death. What happens to us in that last hour when heart and flesh faint and fail? Is there another world beyond the grave? If a man die, shall he live again?

I was much impressed, the other day, by reading that in early Christian art the fact of physical death was almost entirely unrepresented. It did not seem to find any place in the symbolism of those truths which to the mind of the first Christian believers were real and which counted in their scheme of things. Its absence seems to indicate that it possessed for them no fear. They were in daily and hourly danger of suffering for their faith, even during the periods of persecution to the extent of torture and execution; but whatever recoil from such experiences was instinctive to their nature—and it is natural for man to recoil from physical pain—was wholly vanquished by an overwhelming sense of triumphant victory.

The pictorial art of early Christendom emphasises symbols which are representative of life. They are not concerned with the death of the body, which appears to have been regarded as a necessary but inconsequent experience of mortality. They are the palm and the crown, the insignia of those who, having witnessed a good confession on the earth, have departed to be with Christ which is far better. Not until the tenth century do we find that Christian art is beginning to shadow the gloom and fear which were afflicting the best minds of the Church in what was perhaps the most degenerate era in the history of Western civilisation. In consternation at the appalling degradation of morals and religion, the artist, urged on by the Church, left aside the palm and the crown and seized upon the cross-bones and the skull, lifting dramatically before the eyes of men in grotesque and terrible forms the startling reminder of the brevity of life and of the fact that man must die.

It is thus instructive for us to remember that in those times when Christ was most real to His followers the death of the body did not count. To the early Christian there was only one fact to be considered in connection with his own physical dissolution, and that was that Christ had risen from the dead. That mattered everything, and nothing else mattered at all. "Because I live, ye shall live also," was assurance enough to take its terror from the grave. This grasp of the certainty of human survival which Christ guaranteed with a confidence to which all previous speculation was but a flickering candle has burned with a continual glow through the succeeding ages. But it has waxed and waned in correspondence with those periods of exaltation and decline in faith to which circumstances have from time to time submitted His Church.

The revival of that necromancy, or cult of spirits, to which Saul was reduced when, having repudiated God, he was driven to seek the Witch of Endor, and which has flourished with such luxuriance in the wake of the European War, indicates that before the great world-upheaval the Christian hope of personal immortality was by many barely held or appreciated. The wholesale sweeping of so many millions from the blood-red mists of the battlefields into the eternal silence left countless people who had given but scant thought to Church or religion driven in spite of themselves to the conclusion that, unless the world be no more than a madman's freak, bodily death cannot be the end of human personality. Having no ordered religious convictions on which to fall back, they resorted in intellectual desperation to the seance and the crystal-gazer. The reason of mankind through the war was brought up with a sense of dismay against a terrific reality. Men are groping after immortality to-day in a search which is passionate and pathetic. If a man die, shall he live again?

III

Sheer materialism can, of course, give you a partial answer to this question, for it is a mere truism to say that matter is indestructible. The garniture of summer fades, the autumn leaves decay, the bursting cloud descends in rain, the evaporation of the sea ascends, but though constituent elements are dissolved and scattered they are still existent. God made man of the dust of the earth, and at the last to the dust we must return. If a man die, his body, committed to the ground, yet serves through the process of its corruption and dissolution a further function in the material creation. But, unless we are to believe that man's moral and spiritual qualities are wholly dependent on and an integral part of the matter of his physical frame, this is of no assistance to us. We ourselves are surely something more than our mere corruptible bodies. Though our personality requires the organised matter of the human frame as a medium through which to manifest itself and its activities, it is not in itself derivative from it. It is certainly dependent on the body as its vehicle of expression, but that is not to say that it is inherent in it and therefore subject to its inevitable decay.

Again, there is a sense, and a very real sense, in which a man's life, apart from any question of his personal survival after death, is immortal. "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness." In other words, I shall see God, apprehend the divine purpose, and attain my destiny, along the path of right living. This is not man's complete immortality ; nevertheless it is an aspect of it which Christianity emphasises and urges him to pursue. Man lives again in the greater future of the human race. The reflective mind cannot rest content in the supposition that we are merely pitchforked into this world by the hand of chance, nor even in the supposition that, assuming ourselves to be sent

here as part of a divine purpose, our whole concern is not with life's present problems but with what lies beyond them. In the human family of which we are members there surely is embodied a plan in which the lowliest creature plays its specific part, and "nothing walks with aimless feet."

Our life is a part of an eternal process which, unless Christianity be wholly false, is working towards a time, far distant indeed but yet to be attained, when man will have proved himself at last triumphant over the things that war against his soul. The past is living in the present. We are what we are because others before us have lived and died. The future will be moulded by our lives in this present. Man therefore finds a corporate immortality by imposing through his own life and character a certain influence upon the future of his race. He who lives wisely, who identifies himself, his work, his aims, with those qualities of mind and character which through the teaching of Christ we recognise as having real value, identifies himself thereby with that which is above the corroding breath of time and thus is a sharer in whatever destiny awaits the common life of mankind. The teaching of Christ is emphatic upon this, that each individual shall endeavour by his personal life and example to bequeath something of strength and beauty to the collective life of humanity. No man liveth to himself alone.

What are the tributaries that swell the waters of the great and mighty tide of human affairs? First and all essential there is the tiny stream of the individual life. What, think you, has gone to form the deep rivers of national character which pour their waters into the vaster flow of human experience? Hebrew and Greek and Roman, Egyptian, Babylonian, Carthaginian, Spanish, Anglo-Saxon—what went to compose them and their specific contribution to the evolving life of mankind? Was it not each separate grain of truth their thinkers gleaned from the fields of knowledge and

inspiration, each dream their artists dreamed, each line their poets and writers penned, all that their priests and teachers, sailors and soldiers, traders, statesmen, patriots, artisans gave? Yes, was it not the influence of each obscure but faithful spirit which went to mould each racial type? And these, separate, distinct, idiosyncratic, in their turn poured the riches of their experience into the river of human history, that stream which seeks its home in the realisation somewhere and some day of a reign of social righteousness and peace upon the earth which will atone for all the tribulation of mankind's harassed and stormy story.

This undoubtedly is one aspect of immortality impressed on man by Christ. He is to live as one who knows that physical death does not terminate the influence of his character. As the stability of society rests upon the recognition of man's dependence upon man, he is to perfect the law into the emblem of liberty by making the basis of his life and conduct a consecrated social love. He is to remember that he is a vital unit in the structure of civilisation, and so to live and act and think that through him that structure may be conserved, strengthened, and protected. He is to work as one who is aware that he can visualise and plan for far bigger things than the mere interests which are personal to himself, since, as a member of the human race, he is greater than himself. Small indeed is the contribution we can make, but make it we each of us may. We can at all events try to train our minds instinctively to desire and seek the beautiful and true, and so find our true fellowship with the pure and gracious spirits of all the ages who in widely diversified circumstances have sought not their own selfish ends but the betterment of the world in which they live—whose most precious hopes and desires were not for their own mere personal satisfaction for a few fleeting years, but were for the good of their fellows and the redemption of mankind from falsehood and from evil.

To such a standard of life it is surely sufficient incentive for the brave and generous to know that the treasure of their hearts is fixed on that which will still be living when they themselves are dust.

IV

And this conception of corporate immortality to which each faithful life attains in the enrichment of the life of the race inevitably leads us further. The stress which our Lord laid upon such moral values is surely sufficient warrant that those who exhibit them are worthy of eternal life. Having beheld His face in righteousness, shall we ourselves indeed awake and be satisfied in God's likeness at the last?

That, you will say, and rightly say, is of more vital importance. Corporate immortality may be a noble ideal, but it is abstract at the best. Mere sense of kinship with the human race and of having a share in its progress and development is by itself insufficient to support me or to satisfy the longing of my inmost being as daily I draw nearer to the inevitable termination of my earthly pilgrimage. The sun must move towards the west and the evening shadows fall. One day I have got to die. That is the one certain fact I know,

While at my back I always hear
Time's wingéd chariot hurrying near.

Where am I going? or am I going anywhere? In what manner shall I live hereafter? or shall I live at all? Will these eyes of mine that must at last take their farewell of every scene I have known and loved open to another dawn, or must they close in endless sleep? When with my latest breath I whisper good-bye to those who are dearer to me than my own life, will it be good-bye for ever, or only a brief good-night until the morning brings them back to me again?

That indeed is the question. Men have asked it since that amazing trembling hour in the dim mists of

unrecorded time when the soul of man first awoke to a knowledge of its own identity, to an understanding of moral values, and to a consciousness of a greater something outwith its own brief earthly existence. From the gradual evolution of the cosmic process there appeared a creature climbing above the rudimentary mind or instinct of the brute creation and evidencing peculiar qualities which reflected the nature of his Creator. God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and he became a living soul. How or at what period of time this mortal put on immortality we do not know, but man appeared with a distinctive personality whose source and origin cannot be satisfactorily located in the purely physical brain of his animal ancestors, and stood erect, conscious of a kinship with the divine. The theory of evolution can take us far, but it cannot take us all the way. When it has said its last word as to the rise and development of the physical frame of man, we are left with that pertaining to his spiritual nature, whose advent in the world demands for adequate explanation more than is afforded by a mere scientific consideration of the origin of the species. We are forced to the use of the word "creation," and to the belief that on man was superimposed by the act of God an immortal endowment which made him the child of eternity. From that hour the world has echoed with his yearning cry, "If a man die, shall he live again?" And from that hour also he has refused to believe that his ultimate destiny is the grave.

Systems of religious faith grew and flourished and passed away. The hope of immortality breathes in them all, but none ever faced for man the question with a completely confident and unequivocal answer. Frequently, and even in the religious poetry of the Jews who had attained to the noblest conceptions of God, amid the strongest assertion of belief in eternal life there rings out suddenly the cry of doubting lamentation: "Shall thy loving-kindness be declared in the

grave ? ” “ In the grave who shall give thee thanks ? ” Surety came with One from Galilee who turned upside-down all previous ideas concerning the moral and spiritual nature of man and his personal relationship to God, and cried with clarion words of divine assurance, “ I am the resurrection and the life : he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live : and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.”

V

This is a problem which knocks insistently at the door of every heart, and which with increasing frequency invades the thoughts of our quieter moments as life goes on and the lengthening shadows warn us of the transiency of our little day. Through all the nobler art and literature of mankind, through all the colour and beauty of life, rings out like a passing bell the solemn and recurring warning that here we have no continuing city. Incomplete achievement, unfulfilled promise, wasted abilities, strength and genius prematurely garnered by the ruthless sickle of death, impel our thoughts on the great adventure of seeking an enduring habitation which shall redress the imperfection of our mortal state. Armistice-tide is near, and our thoughts are returning to the years of war and to the infinite and universal scourge of the Great Reaper who stripped bare the fields of manhood and of youth, leaving behind a tragic desolation. “ Tell us,” you may say, and you have a right to say it—“ tell us honestly from that pulpit what you yourself believe.”

In answer I will tell you first what I do not believe. My intelligence refuses to accept that my personality so mysterious, so subtle and profound, has no existence of its own but is simply identical with my physical brain. It is indeed intimately associated with the activities of the brain and with nervous action and reaction, but this does not mean that by such it is

produced and that from such it is derived. Personality, as we saw earlier, may require matter as a medium through which to express and manifest itself, but that no more means that it is the product of matter than that any process of mediation is the creator of that which it mediates. I do not believe that all the loves, the hopes, the aspirations which I cherish, and all the values of beauty, truth, and goodness which I, however imperfectly, recognise, are simply natural resultants from a cerebral activity which is their only cause and origin. I do not believe that those qualities of mind and heart which bind me to my nearest and dearest ones, that their loyalties, sacrifices, faith, ideals, peculiarities of character and disposition that make them precious to me, are nothing more than mere physical expressions. I do not believe that the superb and transcendent genius of man, the creations of Homer, Shakespeare, Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael, Dante, Bach, Beethoven, Michael Angelo, to say nothing of the spiritual sublimity of saints and martyrs, heroes and prophets, and the loveliness of all humble, unselfish, and merciful lives—yes, and the beauty of Jesus Christ Himself—that all these can be tersely dismissed as no more than phenomena explicable in terms of physiology.

One's intelligence revolts from such suggestion. It refuses to believe that this "strange, eventful history" which we call our life is the only thing in an ordered universe which is condemned to a grotesque and irrational disorder. I cannot believe that every natural instinct of man is to be satisfied save the highest instinct of his being—which is to see his Maker as He is, and to enjoy Him for ever; that all his acquired character, knowledge, and experience are to go for nothing; that his full intellectual maturity is to find at the end a hellish mockery in a complete annihilation. If there are no such things as moral values, if the wages of sin and of goodness are alike, if the life of Jesus and the life of Nero are to find an equal destiny in a handful of dust

and ashes, there cannot be a God presiding over this universe whose attributes are righteous and whose ways are just. I am aware that there are men who can face with equanimity the idea of their personal extinction in the hour of death, but they are few. Professor Huxley held that view, but he was not at peace. "It is a curious thing," he wrote to his friend John Morley, "that I find my dislike of the thought of extinction increasing as I grow older and nearer to the goal: it flashes across me at all sorts of times, with a sort of horror, that in 1900 I shall probably know no more of what is going on than I did in 1800." Such a conception is to me irreconcilable with any belief in an ordered and rational creation whose beginning and whose end are with God, which belief has always been for Christianity "the working hypothesis of life and thought."

VI

And on the positive side I believe that in Christ, in His revelation of the nature and character of God, in His emphasis upon the value of the individual soul to its Creator, and above all in Himself, life and immortality have been brought to light. I believe that the words He spoke were words of truth, and that experience and history confirm this belief. I believe that the grave had no dominion over Him, that the story of His resurrection is true, that the victor over sin was the victor over death, and that it is impossible to explain subsequent history otherwise than by the acceptance of the authenticity of this fact.

The influence of the Resurrection and the personal sense of a risen Lord ever present with His people was such that empires were lifted off their hinges and the whole stream of human history was diverted into a new channel. And still wherever His gospel takes root the thought of mankind is raised to a new energy, a new hope, and a new idealism. For as in Adam all

die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. Wherever men become possessed by His spirit and converted to Him they find their ideas of God and of man revolutionised, and believe themselves to be related to a divine purpose in creation and to be the heirs of heaven.

The effect of the impact of Christ upon the world is that men are delivered from the paralysing fear that man is a blind automaton, the helpless victim of physical forces and the destined prey of corruption, and become persuaded that the individual soul on this planet, and perhaps on others, for all we know, is the one supreme reality, the moral and spiritual object for whose development and perfection the universe was brought into being. Some people, I find, are troubled by the thought that life may be existent elsewhere than on the earth. Indeed, there may be amid the uncharted deeps of the firmament spiritual beings on other worlds than this, though modern science seems to show an increasing tendency to return to a position which justifies religion in cleaving to the old belief that this earth is the one habitation of such. Because the conditions of other planets would render physical life as we know it impossible, this is not to say that such conditions could not produce creatures of a type beyond our ken who like ourselves might bear an immortal endowment and be destined for that eternal world of perfected spirits which God is preparing for Himself. This, however, though interesting as speculation, is out-with our immediate concern. For us in this our own sphere of spiritual probation it is sufficient to know that in Jesus Christ has shone the true Light which lighteth every man born into *this* world.

By His cross and the mystery which surrounds it, I am convinced, though it is beyond my power of expression, that somehow the principle of the universe must be the principle of love, that so precious in the sight of God are the souls of His children that their value

in His eyes is guarantee enough that they are made not for a few fleeting years but to be partakers of His immortality. "Not a sparrow falleth to the ground without your Father" breathes trust and confidence to those who have their being in a very bewildering world ; but a more blessed assurance still which reaches beyond our present experience is that we are "of more value than many sparrows." Man is the child of a heavenly Father, created in His image and made for fellowship with Him. He is linked to his Creator by the indissoluble chains of a wise and loving purpose which only eternity can fulfil and which death is powerless to impair.

VII

So at this All Saints season, and as Armistice-tide draws near, as our hearts go out in affection and remembrance to those dear to us who are no longer visible to our mortal sight—and we are all remembering someone to-day—let it not be mere remembrance, but a conscious fellowship with them born of a faith that in love and communion they still are ours. "I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." Wherever they are, He is able to keep that which we have committed to His trust. What form do they wear, how shall we see them when we meet again? We do not know. It will not be with the touch of hand or lip. That can never more be again. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God ; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. "Nor touch of human hand, nor face with blooming flesh, nor lips, nor eyes, are in that land." But though we shall not see them with the eye of flesh, there is a clearer sight of the soul. Nor need we regret the passing from us of those earthly bodies, subject as they have been to much limitation and distress. Whatever vehicle of expression our personalities require hereafter, God will provide it, who

giveth to every seed a body of its own. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

We know that when our Lord appeared to His disciples after His resurrection they recognised Him and He said, "Behold, it is I myself." So must it be with the departed. They are still *themselves*, and their personality has not suffered change. Further than that we cannot go, nor need we go. The finite cannot comprehend the infinite, neither can human thought embrace that which eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither has it entered into the heart of man to conceive. Rather let us try to be faithful in our day and to finish the work that is given us to do, remembering that corporate immortality and personal immortality are two aspects of one and the same thing, since by doing our duty in this present world we best fit ourselves for the next. Thus we may look forward in confidence to that day when through the tender mercy of our God, who for Christ's sake has pardoned our sins, our joy will at last be full, and we will see Him whom now our departed loved ones see, and with them will be satisfied in our awakening in His likeness.

Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark !
And may there be no sadness of farewell,
When I embark ;
For, though from out our bourne of time and place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crost the bar.

In the presence of which blessed Hope, surely all shadows flee away !

SERMON PREACHED BEFORE THE KNIGHTS
OF THE ORDER OF THE THISTLE

St. Giles' Cathedral, Sunday Morning, 1st December 1929

[To be created a member of the Most Ancient and Most Noble Order of the Thistle is the greatest honour that can come to a Scotsman. The roll of its Knights is very largely an epitome of Scotland's history. The Order, moreover, is domestic to the northern kingdom, for, while Scotsmen can and do hold other orders, only a Scotsman can be a Knight of the Thistle. We cannot say with any accuracy whence arose the germinative idea of this ancient order of chivalry, or when or how or where it had its birth. Phantasy and legend weave their dreams, and speculation builds its theories, but what remains as substance in the final analysis of the earliest traditions no man knows.

These take us back to a primitive origin in rude and barbarous times. Achaius, King of Scots, so runs the tale, was once upon a time engaged in fierce battle with Athelstan, King of the Saxons, when in the midst of the bloody conflict there appeared a white cross shining in the heavens, in form like unto that on which St. Andrew suffered martyrdom, "by which apparition the Scots being encouraged, put their enemies to flight, killing the said Athelstan with most of his followers." In thankful commemoration of this signal victory, Achaius is said to have instituted the Most Ancient and Most Noble Order of the Thistle, consisting of the Sovereign and twelve Knights Brethren, "in allusion to our Blessed Saviour and His Twelve Apostles, and under the protection of our Blessed Lady and the holy apostle St. Andrew, Patron of Scotland, the said Order being instituted for defence of the Christian religion." And further, we are told in the warrant of King James VII. that it is "most certain, by the general consent of ancient and modern historians, and by several other authentic proofs, and documents, and records of this Kingdom, that the said Most Ancient and Most Noble Order of the Thistle continued in great glory and splendour for many hundreds of years, and that several Foreign Princes and Kings have been Knights of the said Order, and that the same was always had in great respect and honour, in all places wherever Christian Valour

advanced the glory of the Cross, until the unfortunate rebellion against His Majesty's Royal Great-grandmother Mary Queen of Scots (of most pious and blessed memory), at which time the splendour both of Church and Monarchy fell together in contempt, and this Most Noble Order, with all its Ornaments, Rites, and Ceremonies, was extinguished, some of the Brethren of that Order laying the Ensigns thereof aside, out of a rebellious contempt of their then Sovereign Lady, His Majesty's said Royal Great-grandmother, and others of them being forced to fly into foreign countries for safety of their lives."

We have to bear in mind, however, that it is also "most certain" that as regards the earliest tradition the figure of St. Andrew is not known to have been used as a national symbol until the latter years of the fourteenth century, and that not until the reign of King James III. did the thistle emerge as an accepted emblem.

By the middle of the sixteenth century our feet are on firmer ground. Testimony on which considerable reliance may be placed traces the origin of the Order to the year 1540 and its foundation to King James V. Before that date this monarch himself had been decorated with orders of high distinction by several foreign kings, and it is not unreasonable to suppose that he desired to have a Scottish decoration to bestow in return upon those rulers who had so signally honoured him. For to James had come the Order of the Golden Fleece from the Emperor Charles V., the Order of St. Michael from Francis I. of France, and the illustrious Garter from Henry VIII. of England. It is at all events recorded that, to commemorate the receiving of these foreign decorations, which he valued very highly, King James "kept open court, and solemnised the several feasts of St. Andrew, the Golden Fleece, St. Michael and St. George," and in addition "caused to be carved above the gateway of the Palace at Linlithgow the arms of those princes encircled by their respective orders, together with the Order of the Thistle."

But two years later the Thistle suffered grievous shock. King James went the way of all the world, and his daughter Mary succeeded to her heritage of tragedy and disaster. Amid the confusions of her hapless reign and what her great-grandson later termed the "dismal disorders and rebellions" which characterised the times of her three successors, the Scottish Order fell into complete neglect, its sovereigns no doubt too fully occupied with the distractions of their turbulent northern kingdom. It was King James VII. who eventually raised it from its low estate, established it again in honour and renown, promulgated a new body of statutes and ordinances for its regulation, created eight knights in 1687, and appointed for the Order a home in the historic Abbey Church of Holyrood. All that remained of this once noble build-

ing was the nave, but this, as a contemporary writer declares, was now "beautifully and richly decorated," with, at the east end, a lofty throne, and to north and south twelve knights' stalls, each flanked by Corinthian columns and approached by five steps and surmounted by banners and trophies.

Almost immediately the clouds of disaster lowered again. Amid the growling murmurs of an angry populace the Church had been reconsecrated according to the Roman usage, an altar, images, and vestments having arrived by ship from London, and Mass again was celebrated at the command of the King. Within a year the Revolution broke in thunder on the ancient abbey, the infuriated Edinburgh mob smashed down its doors, ransacked the church, broke in pieces the altar, attacked and destroyed the fittings and decorations, and reduced the stalls of the knights to matchwood. Again the Order went into exile, and for two hundred and twenty years was to remain without a home, since in the course of time the chapel at Holyrood fell into further disrepair and became the roofless ruin that we know to-day.

No new appointments to the Order of the Thistle were made during the reigns of William and Mary, but at last in 1703 Queen Anne revived it and established it in the dignity and honour in which it thereafter remained. In 1827 King George IV. raised the number of the knights to sixteen. Nineteen years ago, in 1911, owing to the great munificence of the family of Leven and Melville, the new and resplendent chapel built for the Order and attached to St. Giles' Cathedral—one of the architectural and artistic treasures of Scotland—was inaugurated by His Majesty the King. It had been hoped to achieve a restoration of the ruined nave at Holyrood as a home for the Order; but this having been declared by experts to be impossible, the new chapel at St. Giles' was embarked upon and was completed in two years. On the Sunday following St. Andrew's Day, the Knights of the Thistle annually meet for worship in the chapel, and thereafter attend in state the morning service in St. Giles' Cathedral. The following sermon was delivered in St. Giles' on 1st December 1929, immediately after the service in the chapel, at which the preacher had officiated as Dean of the Order.]

The Lord is at hand.—*Epistle to the Philippians* iv. 5.

I

ADVENT calls us to consider the Second Coming of Jesus Christ in the power and glory of His judgment. Since our Lord disappeared from the sight of men this question has cast a spell of reverent wonder upon the

reflections of Christendom. Its vastness paralyses human thought and leaves our highest speculation baffled and incomplete. Its true significance is and must remain an unfathomable enigma. The metaphorical phraseology descriptive of the Second Advent used by our Lord and His apostles was intended to impress Jewish listeners, to whom such allegorical speech and symbolism were necessary for full understanding and appreciation of the truth which underlay them. It is obviously figurative, as is the Book of the Revelation, and is not to be regarded as a detailed expression of actualities. The vivid and dramatic pictures of the rending of the heavens, the sudden interruption of the world order by the returning Christ, the thunders of the judgment, the glories of paradise, and the fires of hell were painted for a certain audience to which such highly-coloured apocalyptic language was part of a long-inherited tradition.

Indeed, the New Testament teaching on this question has been subject to divers interpretations, some of them reasonable and others quite extravagant. St. Paul's own ideas went through considerable evolution and readjustment. He commenced by accepting the belief current among the earliest Christians that the resurrection of Christ was but the prelude to His immediate reappearance to establish His reign upon the earth, and that the end of all things was at hand. But in time, though still looking, as indeed we do also, for "the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ," he modified his views as he seemed to approach the conclusion that the Second Coming of our Lord must be regarded as lying in the close of the ages when the story of mankind had been told to its finish. The eschatological visions of the New Testament concerning the ultimate winding up of the world's affairs concern us only as an allegory, and that only in so far as the allegory itself points to a definite truth. But this truth the teaching of Christ reiterates with

emphatic insistence. God Almighty is the Judge of men, good and evil must be tried at the assizes of His divine justice, and the standard of it is the mind and character of Christ.

II

There must, so Advent reminds us, be some final event to which all things are moving. What is it? Where is this earth going? To what consummation, if to any, does the world process lead? Is it all but a disordered blundering towards an ultimate and purposeless annihilation? Well, the mind of man has always to a greater or less extent been persuaded that the mingled tragedy and splendour of this earth demand an explanation which the things of time themselves cannot properly afford. Through all the poetry, drama, and philosophy of the ancient world, as a gifted modern writer reminds us, we witness the best of human thought, from Homer to St. John the Baptist, searching with unflagging earnestness for a reliable conception of a final and infallible justice which would vindicate goodness and redress the ravages of wrong. The Psalmist was not alone in being perplexed by the problem of good and evil, the sorrows that afflict the just, and the prosperity of such of the wicked as flourish like the green bay-tree. And we all have our moments when, confronted with oppression, cruelty, suffering, unrewarded merit, sorrow, and pain, we feel as if we were in the grip of a fantastic nightmare. Things as they are, indeed, seem to make but a miserable attempt at doing justice to anybody or anything. We look around us and on all the ills that flesh is heir to, and ask ourselves if the mighty frame of the universe throbs with life and the stars revolve in their courses only in order to produce a world like this.

Men have turned from such a suggestion with a sickening revulsion. They have stood erect and faced the facts and refused to believe themselves the sport

and toy of a malignant fate. The Christian religion, as Dr. T. R. Glover has strongly emphasised, gave utterance to a new conviction that summed up and consolidated all previous gropings after a solution of the tangled scheme of human affairs : " We must all appear at the judgment-seat of Christ ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." The world had a meaning, life was purposeful, Jesus was the final arbiter and rewarder, and the down-trodden and the oppressed took fresh heart at this. The persecution loosed against the early Church and the seeming triumph of the powers of the world forced the first Christians to anticipate this judgment-seat as actually imminent. The wish perhaps was father to the thought. Christ would come shortly, avenge the afflictions of His faithful, destroy their oppressors, and establish His kingdom. We find an exile on the island of Patmos voicing this faith in no uncertain words : " Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me."

We have moved away, of course, from this limited conception. We no longer look for a sudden advent at any moment of the Eternal Judge. But into that imagery which our fathers held to be a reality let us hope that we have read a deeper meaning. However the words and phraseology may change, the truth itself remains unchanging. For truth is of God, and He cannot deny Himself. Advent as with a trumpet should rouse us from our " ease in Zion," our intellectual and spiritual indolence, our self-centredness, and our slipshod thinking concerning God, and man, and life in general, to the remembrance that the judgments of the Lord in very truth are in the earth, and that here and now, daily and hourly, we and all men are weighed in the balances of His justice. Disregard the fact as we may, and evolve our shoddy philosophies of life as we will, we cannot avoid the knowledge that the moral sense of the best of mankind has through the crucible

of much bitter experiment and experience evolved steadily towards the standard of the character of Christ. Men, wayward and rebellious though the human heart may be, cannot but admit that His values do most certainly form the supreme criterion of human conduct. In the light of all that He was, these imperfect lives of ours are sternly judged even by our own conscience, and in spite of all our efforts to narcotise it.

If the older thought regarding the Last Day has been outgrown and has passed from us, yet life itself and our common experience evidence clearly enough to the eye that can see and the heart that can understand that the Advent of Christ is no remote piece of dramatic stage-scenery. In the catastrophes which through the ages have dogged with disaster and degradation those arrogant and futile efforts of mankind which have been directed against His cause, history has proved that His judgment-seat is the most sure and certain of all realities, and that men and nations must and do continually appear arraigned before it. The Lord indeed is at hand.

III

A few years ago I revisited a sector of the Ypres Salient which I had not seen since the days when the Great War was raging at its height. When last I had been in this particular village it was a foul and shapeless waste of utter devastation. Not one stone stood upon another throughout an area which constituted a charnel-pit of horrible obscenities and indescribable abominations. It was a veritable abyss of hell upon earth. To-day, everything is rebuilt and restored, fresh, rustic, comely, a scene of thriving rural life and a busy contented peasantry. No vestige of its agony remains. The deep-toned bell of a large new church, erected on the site of its predecessor which had been pounded into dust, called the villagers to prayer.

In the tranquil light of a summer evening I entered

marvelling into the dim interior of this beautiful sanctuary, reared as it was upon what, when I remembered it, made me shudder even after the passage of the years. In the porch a stained-glass window, crude but arresting, caught and held my attention ; and as I looked at it I was suddenly filled with shame and compassion for the insensate folly and madness of the world. At the same time I was awed and silenced, as if confronted with the majesty and timelessness of God.

From the window glowed the coloured representation of an incident in the Gospel. It was a ship making heavy weather on wild and tempestuous seas, and on its flag, wrenched and torn by the driving winds, was inscribed the word *Ecclesia*—the Church. On the left of the picture ran this inscription in Latin, "Save, Lord, we perish !" And on the right was this, "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith ?" And why indeed ? There on the site of a fierce and terrible destruction, so utter and complete as almost to have been abandoned as beyond the capacity of man to restore, the altar of the Lord had risen again from the wilderness that the passions of mankind had made. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith ?

And many a time has the ark of the Church appeared to be in imminent danger of foundering upon the stormy seas of the world's hostility and sin. But always to her aid has Jesus Christ returned. In every age her safety has been secured by what John Milton called "the dear might of Him who walked upon the waves." Christendom has not infrequently sunk to helplessness and impotence by its own selfishness and corruption. Yet, consistently it has found restoration of soul and renewal of strength and purpose whenever it has recaptured the vision of its Lord, living and at hand. The survival power of Jesus Christ is that which fills His friends with confidence and His foes with fear. No grave that man can dig can bind or hold Him. From

the dust and debris of collapsed institutions, discredited philosophies, outworn creeds, and obsolete ideas He emerges unconquered and unimpaired, again to confront and disturb the world and put its wrongs to an open shame.

His presence has at times been disconcerting, and man has done his best to do away with Him. In wilful and passionate revolt against all that His gospel demands and implies, he has smashed His altars, proscribed His religion, and massacred His followers. But still He lives. Men cannot get rid of Him though they make their bed in hell or take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea. No depths can drown Him, and no violence can overthrow His cause. Across the waves of religious and political revolution, across the angry spray of tempestuous human upheavals, His pierced feet have carried Him in safety. Long as the storm may last, Jesus Christ comes back again, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

IV

The Christian faith insists that there is a progressive principle, a divine purpose working through all creation. Lord Balfour has observed that when faced with the two alternatives of chance or divine guidance, we are compelled to accept the latter. It is of course quite true, as is commonly complained these days, that much which men in their self-complacency regard as progress may under a more critical and dispassionate survey look suspiciously like retrogression, and that there is a thoughtless tendency on the part of many of us to confuse the undoubtedly rising standard of life's material comforts with the advance of civilisation. We find it also repeatedly asserted, and not without some reason, that a greater simplicity of life would very probably afford a soil more receptive for the seeds of the higher spiritual virtues than is offered by a good deal of our

modern social life and that economic organisation of which we so proudly boast. Dr. Inge, moreover, informs us, unless I misunderstand him, that so far as he can see there has been little real progress in human nature for the last twenty thousand years ; but though we all highly respect this distinguished thinker, we are none of us infallible in our judgments, and such statements we take with caution. Indeed, all that we hear and read in this direction, and there is much of it to-day, is the only to be expected outcome of the harvest of disillusionment which has been reaped in the troubled fields of this century by a world which was reared upon the buoyant and optimistic philosophy of the Victorian age.

But let us be clear on this—there is no such thing as inevitable and mechanical progress working automatically despite all facts and circumstances, and the doctrine of muddling through and that things all turn out right in the end is the creed of fools. Whatever ground man has gained has been won slowly and at a very bitter cost. Also, ground gained may be lost, and humanity too frequently loses it through its own faults and follies. Demosthenes observed that it seemed more difficult to maintain our advantages than to win them. Conclusions reached in the realm of biology do not necessarily apply to moral and spiritual evolution. Yet to me it seems impossible to escape from the conviction that the principle of the universe is the principle of a Godward progress, though warring against the operation of that principle are the selfishness and sin of man, which render progress by no means inevitable and anything save automatic, but dependent upon man's faithful exercise of moral choice and effort and his loyal allegiance to the revealed will of his Creator.

The investigator can, I suppose, find some justification for the statement (with which we are all becoming familiarised) that the most advanced conditions of twentieth-century prosperity bring no more inward blessedness than, and possibly not so much as, was theirs

who in ancient times tended their flocks on the slopes above the blue Aegean, and that men were as happy in the mediæval era as they are in the industrial age, and probably happier. But it is difficult, surely, to contemplate the best in modern culture and development and at the same time assert that we have not progressed at all. I cannot conceive how any student of history can deny that Jesus Christ has ennobled and enriched the life of mankind. None but a fanatical reactionary can maintain that the life of humanity has not become steadily and increasingly ampler and deeper. Civilisations have risen and passed away, but in passing they have cast their contributions of experience, culture, and achievement into the common life of the race. Against the humiliations of history we must set its nobilities, sacrifice, and endurance for justice, truth, and liberty. It is surely but idle and irreflective to assert, as some modern writers do not hesitate to do, that to-day we are no more bettered or developed morally, spiritually, and intellectually than we would have been had we continued to live a tribal and pastoral life without having entered into the heritage of an Egypt, an Israel, a Greece, a Rome, a rising Western civilisation, a Catholic Church, a Renaissance, a Reformation, a British imperial expansion, and an industrial era.

The stream of life is constantly swelling and ever flowing. But whither? We cannot get rid of the necessity for embarking on this wonderful mental exploration by stating in general terms that it is an infinite progressiveness. What does that mean? If this be an ordered universe, progressiveness must have an ultimate object which is both reasonable and good. Where does that object lie? Does it lie in time or beyond it? We know that at some point in time this planet will become no longer capable of supporting life, and all that man has built upon it must inevitably be swept away. The planet itself must some day cease

to exist, and it seems possible to prognosticate with moderately reasonable accuracy the limits of this terrestrial episode. The whole universe, indeed, as we also know, is slowly dying. Is that to be the conclusion to the history of the human race, which through æons of evolving life has felt itself akin to the divine, and through sacrifice, pain, and travail has won its spiritual and intellectual strength, climbing, with many sordid failures and backslidings, to the heights of moral grandeur?

Is it not more in keeping with our highest thought and the most deeply rooted instincts of our being to believe that human life is destined towards something which, though wrapped in the infinite and eternal, is nevertheless positive and definite? The universe, we are told, evidences two distinct tendencies—a physical decay and a spiritual ascent. Is the ultimate secret not foreshadowed by those words of St. Paul, “that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die”? Is the profound inward and outward experience of mankind that life is born of death not essentially related to the fundamental truth of all things? And is the universe itself not created and ordained to eventual dissolution that from it may arise the immortal spirit of man? Yea, surely God has made us for Himself, and all the consummate achievement of the mind of man, his loftiest hopes and aspirations, his discoveries and his creative genius, his strange and diversified experience, his true inward greatness, his laughter and his tears, the successive triumphs of the human spirit, have surely not been the shadowy unrealities of a phantom existence, here to-day and gone to-morrow, but have been related to a grander and more blessed state of being where he shall partake of eternal life and wisdom.

To this point we can propel the vision of our souls, but no further. For then comes the question before which the mind falters and the vision fails. What shall be the end, when at last the curtain falls, and the lights

go out, and the players leave the stage—when man's experience in these earthly scenes shall be complete? How can we answer this but in words whose allegorical significance and dramatic imagery we do not even begin to understand?—"Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."

V

We find as we study the words of Christ, and the writings of those who lived with Him and knew Him, that through them all there runs this confidence and certainty of something too tremendous to be expressed by the stammering words of mortal tongues or the limited vision of the human mind. An emphasis is consistently laid upon the fact that there will and must be an end to all things, and the last chapter written in the story of mankind. Prophets, poets, seers, and saints have attempted in words of faith and majesty to paint their glowing pictures of that indescribable consummation when the day appointed by the Great Disposer of all events shall draw nigh. Nevertheless it eludes the highest flight of our imagination. Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive it. But confident through the ages rings out the voice of Christ proclaiming that His kingdom must prevail and His victory is secure; that in Him, in whom lies the solution of life and death and all the baffling perplexities of this bewildering world, all shall one day be completed, explained, and understood; that the labour and the travail, the pain and the toil, will be proved to have been well worth while, since they have forced man to search for the truth of God and thereby have won for him his citizenship in that new world of undying spirits

for which all things here have been the preparation. "Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father ; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." The day shall break and the shadows flee away. He shall be made manifest, and every eye shall behold Him !

That is the faith which assures the Christian believer that all is well, though the earth be removed and the heavens fall. He is safe and naught can harm him, neither death nor life. Thus it is that those who are persuaded of the truth and reality of Christ fling their challenge into the teeth of the powers of sin and darkness. Whatever things may seem to be, however mankind may be harassed and beaten and tortured by the forces of evil

In this bad, twisted, topsy-turvy world,
Where all the heaviest wrongs get uppermost,

there is no chaos in the universe, no fear, and no despair. "Through the ages one increasing purpose runs." The fortunes of battle may rise and fall, the line may be broken, there may be retreat and disaster and temporary ruin, the political fabric of empires may crumble and civilisations rise and pass away ; but through all the mists and deceptive twilight the Cross shines forth in the power of its conquering love. Advent sounds its message to the faltering hearts of men : "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last."

Thus are we called to remember the Christian virtue of patience. "Be patient, therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord." Christ Himself quite certainly prepared men for an indefinite future, and expressly set Himself to instil into the minds of His followers a sense of the magnitude of the task which He committed to them in commissioning them to be the ambassadors in

the world of the Kingdom of God. True it is, as I observed earlier, that His friends misunderstood His language and after He had left them looked expectantly for His immediate return and the final judgment of the world. But Christian thought ere long read His words with clearer understanding, and realised that His emphasis on the microscopic piece of leaven which leaveneth in time the whole lump, and on the grain of mustard seed which will eventually become the tree, was the teaching of One who did not anticipate immediate results by a catastrophic setting aside of natural development by the sudden appearance of a descending God, but of One who sowed the seed of a gospel prepared to wait through the long evolution of man's moral and spiritual nature until the coming to fruition of the harvest. "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth." "The Kingdom of God is like unto a grain of mustard seed." "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations." These were surely the words of One who obviously looked into the uncharted vistas of ages yet to come.

VI

We are wise, therefore, to remember that while earnestness and ardour are excellent things, they can easily get out of hand. They must not be headstrong, but submit themselves to the control of a sane and reasonable patience. The furtherance of truth, justice, peace, unselfishness, love, and righteousness is the duty to which we as Christians are committed, but at the same time we ought always to remember that in our social and political no less than in our religious life, moderation and forbearance both in speech and action are necessary conditions for any real and abiding progress. Bigoted and irreflective zeal, however well-intentioned, can be as great a deterrent to the advancement of Christ's

Kingdom as the open assaults of His enemies. It is a noble and Christ-like thing to desire passionately that the Kingdom of God shall be established on the earth, that injustice, wrong, and oppression shall be swept away, and every selfish dominion humbled in the dust ; but we must not forget that the will of God can be done only by methods which accord with that will as revealed in Jesus. We have to learn to be enthusiastic without being offensive, and to be resolute without being uncharitable.

The petition, "Thy Kingdom come," is definitely related to its successor, "Thy will be done." An inert indifference to the woes and sufferings of mankind is quite inconsistent with the spirit of Christ, but in reality no more so than efforts to alleviate them carried on by methods which are foreign to His nature. Men, for instance, have frequently and with quite honest conviction sought to advance the Kingdom of God by merciless and bloody cruelty ; and the somewhat naïve belief that you are doing a man a good turn by putting him to bodily death in order to save his soul was for long a popular conception in the Church, as was evidenced in its persecutions against heresy and error. And though this veneered savagery in its crudest sense has been outgrown by the Church, it is still very much alive in the world, and our own era has witnessed at least one nation attempting the re-creation of a society which was admittedly bad by the direct expedients of destructive despotism and widespread massacre.

History has taught us, though we are slow to learn, what to expect as the inevitable consequences of such impatient and wicked folly. The solution of the delicate and complex problem of social injustice has been, and still is more often than not, hampered and rendered impossible owing to the fact that the methods of Jesus are disregarded and the discredited weapons of aggressive force and compulsion employed. There are many people to-day out on this errand—the creation

of an improved society—employing means the character of which condemns at the outset their every effort as essentially futile. Our activities must be controlled by the wisdom which is from above, and which is pure and peaceable. The children of God are most truly known not only by their perseverance but by their patience. “He that believeth shall not make haste,” Isaiah warns us; and St. John says, “this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.” Our attitude must neither be a negative resignation to things as they are, nor yet an obstinate and stupid attempt to knock down walls with our heads; for though human heads often prove to be thick enough, they are no match, when used merely as battering-rams, for the bricks and mortar of entrenched circumstances.

Prudence and foresight, gentleness and long-suffering, as well as generosity, faith, and courage, are essential to the Christian character. Our Lord, though maintaining the Kingdom of God to be a condition of society which men could attain, met their failure not by recrimination, anger, and contempt, much less by methods of inquisitorial torture or castigation, but by a spirit of unwearied patience which loved, forgave, restored, and tried again. He never lost faith in man, for in His patience He possessed His soul. His followers ought surely to be known by the same hall-mark. It is the most difficult lesson we have to learn—I speak for myself, and possibly for some of you. Someone has observed, but I forget who, that it is the restless, intolerant spirit—however lofty be its motives—and the impatient, unimaginative incapacity or unwillingness to bear with the slow response of the weak and the provoking irresponsibility of the wayward, which greatly militate against a really progressive and Christ-like atmosphere among so many of those who honestly seek to do good. “Patience,” said Bishop Horne in a noble passage, “is the guardian of faith, the preserver of peace, the cherisher of love, the teacher of humility.

Patience governs the flesh, strengthens the spirit, sweetens the temper, stifles anger, extinguishes envy, subdues pride ; she bridles the tongue, refrains the hand, tramples upon temptations, endures persecutions, consummates martyrdom. Patience produces unity in the church, loyalty in the state, harmony in families and societies ; she comforts the poor and moderates the rich ; she makes us humble in prosperity, cheerful in adversity, unmoved by calumny and reproach ; she teaches us to forgive those who have injured us, and to be the first in asking forgiveness of those whom we have injured ; she delights the faithful, and invites the unbelieving ; she adorns the woman, and improves the man ; is loved in a child, praised in a young man, admired in an old man ; she is beautiful in either sex and every age."

VII

Advent has also another practical lesson for us men and women, living as we do in this present world and busied and harassed with its problems and activities. We touched on it earlier, and saw that we will receive little help from this season by the contemplation of the Second Coming of Jesus Christ as a remote contingency. What concerns us most deeply is that it is an ever-present reality. Each day, each hour, reveals to the earnest soul the fact that Christ is near us and about us and is constantly returning in the power and love of His judgments. We are not judged hereafter, but in fact here and now. Every minute of our lives we stand before the Great White Throne, and by the mind and character of Jesus our minds and characters are reviewed in the courts of His justice. The Lord is at hand !

I fled Him, down the nights and down the days ;
 I fled Him, down the arches of the years ;
 I fled Him, down the labyrinthine ways
 Of my own mind ; and in the mist of tears

I hid from Him, and under running laughter.
 Up vistaed hopes I sped ;
 And shot, precipitated
 Adown Titanic glooms or chasmed fears,
 From those strong Feet that followed, followed after.
 But with unhurrying chase,
 And unperturbed pace,
 Deliberate speed, majestic instancy,
 They beat—and a Voice beat
 More instant than the Feet . . .

He is at hand, yet surely there can be no fear in that presence. Our Judge is also our Saviour, and perfect love casteth out fear. If before His infinite holiness a sinful mortal falls prostrate in reverence and awe, yet too his heart is touched and comforted by the gracious and compassionate gospel of His peace. Yes, in our individual experience we certainly know that our dear Lord comes back again. He returns in supremest reality in the Blessed Sacrament of His Body and Blood, by which transcendent mystery He comes among us and feeds us with Himself. He returns in our times of prayer when the spirit is quiet and the heart is responsive and still. He comes in the worship of this holy house, and at the door of our souls He stands and knocks. And in all the difficulties, and worries, and sorrows that befall us, the Redeemer comes back with healing in His wings. This is a great and holy truth well proven in a multitude of lives which in every generation have confessed, and to-day confess, with thankfulness and joy that the Advent of Jesus Christ in the normal things of existence is true as God Himself. Come back to us He does, and when He comes the glories of a forgotten heaven fall across the pathway and the purpose of life is no longer a doubt but a reality. Brethren, whether your thoughts this morning are for yourselves or for those you love here on earth or beyond the veil, I ask you to take to yourself the blessed message of Advent that Jesus Christ can come in comfort to the

mourner, in courage to the tempted, in friendship to the lonely, in solace to the sufferer, in strength to the weak, in forgiveness to the sinner, in peace to the dying, and in glory to the dead.

The passing of the years ought to teach us wisdom and urge us to appreciate those lessons which God in His providence is ever seeking to impart. And that which this Advent season contains for us should quicken us to the endeavour to order and adjust our lives so that the words of our mouths and the meditation of our hearts may be more acceptable to that Ear which never wearies, and we ourselves and all we do and are be more pleasing in the sight of that Eye which never sleeps. And if to any here this morning the call of Advent Sunday shall come as an incentive more loyally to live and work as one who believes his Lord is at hand, what is he to do? What is the path that leads men unto life?

Well, its gates are impeded by no barriers of pharisaic self-righteousness or bleak inhuman austerities of life practised in the name of religion. The key which unlocks them is a genuine penitence for the failures and imperfections of the past, and an honest and sincere resolve to amend the future according to God's will. And the road itself, what is it? No more if no less than the road He trod, who on His cross yielded up Himself to His Father's wise and holy will—a road of ready sacrifice, of faithfulness in the exercise of our gifts and capacities and in the loyal discharge of our appointed work, of splendid courage, of broad sympathy, of infectious buoyancy of spirit and optimistic purpose amid the crowding problems and disappointments of the world, of willingness to serve rather than to be served, to give rather than to receive, to judge not that we be not judged, to forgive that we may be forgiven—the road of Christian chivalry, the highway of the paladins of God.

VIII

And indeed our thoughts to-day are naturally receptive to the idea of chivalry when with us are worshipping the members of our most ancient and most noble Order of Scottish Knighthood. Chivalry in its origin was of course the atmosphere which surrounded the mediæval knight and which was impregnated with the idealism of Christianity. The symbolic and religious character of his investiture, the profound respect paid to women, the championship of the weak and the oppressed, the development of the ideal of personal honour, and the maintenance of right against might, these formed that *ethos* which from its earliest times was closely bound up with the order of knighthood. Chivalry concerned itself much more with the duties and obligations than with the rights and privileges of knighthood. It demanded that the knight should bear "without fear and without reproach" the white flower of courageous Christian manhood. Let us seek to revive this idealism and infuse it into our common life, that we all may be numbered in that most glorious and holy order, the goodly fellowship of the gallant knights of God.

Despite the cynic, chivalry and idealism are not dead. A multitude of heroic souls still selflessly pursue throughout the world the search for the Holy Grail. Our modern life is not adequately described by those who grub in the refuse-heaps of moral and social degradation. There are still the wide green fields of sacrifice, the mountain peaks of true nobility, the calvaries where the brave and the faithful are content to be crucified on the cross of their conscience. The noisy and the ostentatious do not constitute the world. The real world, the world that matters and where enduring things are done, is inhabited by the quiet and good people who are trying to do their duty and to live chivalrous, useful, and gracious lives in the spirit of

Jesus Christ. Custom and fashion may change, but chivalry will never perish from the earth. Nor need we fear, despite the chaos of our age, that idealism will ever lack recruits. For humanity, made in the image of the divine, will always produce in the brave and the unselfish the noble knighthood of the cross.

If, then, we can breathe this spirit into our own lives, we can greet the Advent call—"Behold, I come quickly"—with joy and not with fear, as we remember the great and solemn advent of our Lord which each one of us must inevitably see. When the shadows deepen and the sun goes down, in that last hour to one and all the Son of Man must come. To some of us it will be sooner than to others, but to each of us at length. Blessed are those servants whom the Lord when He cometh shall find watching. We must try as Christians to face this inexorable fact without fear, remembering that it is the heritage of all flesh, and that the divine love which called us into being will not leave us or betray us at the last. Here, amid these changing and uncertain scenes, to be the best that we can be and to do the best that we can do, to train our minds and souls to appreciate and desire alone the abiding things of love and beauty, truth and goodness, is to be secure in life and in death. For those who seek to identify themselves with those things which are precious unto God will, whatever be the conditions of life that await us hereafter, find themselves in no strange and unknown country, but in the blessedness of a dear and familiar home.

THE INAUGURATION OF THE SHRINE OF YOUTH

*Opened in St. Giles' Cathedral, 28th December 1929, by
The Earl Haig*

I

IN the heart of the "old town" of Edinburgh, St. Giles' Cathedral stands on the Royal Mile, that highway of romance between the Castle and the Palace of Holyroodhouse. On its site there has been a place of Christian worship for more than a thousand years.

The ancient church, massive and irregular beneath the graceful crown which caps its age-encrusted tower, binds the city's present to the past. Around and within its walls have surged the waves of Scotland's history, and its every stone has become invested with precious memories even as the sea-wind weaves the lichen on the rocks. Twice has that church, begun in 1120 by Alexander I. of Scotland on the foundation of an earlier building, been desecrated, burned, and ruined by English invaders, and faithfully restored again by the piety and devotion of the citizens of Edinburgh.

Secretly within its shadows French and Scottish knights have plotted and planned their English raids. To its altars flocked the wailing women of Edinburgh on receiving news of Flodden. Prelate and priest and presbyter have all had their periods of possession, and Cromwell's soldiers, having expelled the members of the General Assembly, preached from its pulpit with pistols in their belts. Here John Knox thundered forth his principles of spiritual and democratic liberty. Here

Scottish literature dawned in the person of Gavin Douglas, and the advent of printing is commemorated in a side-chapel built by Walter Chepman in honour of his royal patron, James iv. Here kings worshipped, James vi. took his farewell of Scotland, Moray and Montrose found their sepulchres, and here the rival factions of contending ecclesiasticism have stormed and rioted. Its Lantern Tower has housed a garrison and a powder magazine, and twice has been manned as a battery with grinning cannon ; its aisles have echoed to the clank of armour, to the savage cries of angry mobs, and to the moan of the captive and the wounded ; its ancient roof has covered not only turbulent General Assemblies, but Parliament, the Courts of Justice, and the City Gaol.

Architecturally St. Giles' can put forward no claim to any pre-eminence among our nobler cathedrals. It cannot, for instance, bear comparison with great St. Mungo's in the west. The ravages of political and ecclesiastical strife, the destroying sway of troubled times, the addition of many aisles and chapels, and the destruction of others at the hands of iconoclasts and "restoring" vandals, have spoiled its symmetry and left it rambling and inchoate.

But no patriotic Scotsman can enter that old church without a quickening of his pulses. He feels that there he is in a holy of holies of his nation. The ages meet about him and unfold before his eyes the pageantry of what Principal Story called Scotland's "stormy and gallant history." He is enveloped by an atmosphere wholly unique. There is a strangely solemn grandeur, a severe dignity, a mellow glow from distant centuries, which lay a spell upon the least responsive heart.

II

The Shrine of Youth, which, having been duly furnished and equipped, was on the 28th December 1929

inaugurated with stately ceremonial, will in coming years take its place as one of the most arresting features of St. Giles'. It represents the first occasion on which the Church has officially recognised the whole Youth Movement of the capital of Scotland in all its branches and divisions. Within it the divers organisations of youth in Edinburgh have been afforded for their representative colours, banners, and other insignia an honourable and hallowed sanctuary. It is hoped that by the influence of this spiritual home wherein shall be preserved in reverence and dignity the emblems round which their loyalty and allegiance cling, and which represent to them their duty towards their Sovereign, their country, and all mankind, there may be deepened in the hearts of each member of the Youth Movement a sense of that Christian idealism in which the aims and objects of their various organisations are unified, of their common hope for the brotherhood of men, and a grateful knowledge that they too have a rightful place within the Father's house.

The Shrine occupies the Chambers Memorial Chapel, a side chapel restored in 1885 by public subscription to the memory of Dr. William Chambers, and as an act of grateful recognition on the part of the community of the debt which Scotland owed to him for his munificent renovation of its National Zion. This chapel contains some of the most ancient and interesting masonry in St. Giles'. We are slow as a rule in taking full advantage of the opportunities of devotional usefulness which our older ecclesiastical buildings offer, and until its resurrection as the Shrine of Youth the Chambers Memorial Chapel since its restoration stood empty and uninhabited. To-day it shines a thing of beauty, a gleaming gem of artistry and colour set in the midst of the Cathedral's dim and vasty interior.

But the Shrine is more than a thing of beauty, though even as that alone it will be welcomed in a country which is only now awakening from a long neglect of its

artistic heritage. It is vested with an historic significance, real as that which attaches to the grave of Montrose in the crypt or to the recumbent effigy of Argyle in its little chapel off the north aisle of the nave. For this Shrine is representative of a definite era in social evolution. One of the most striking characteristics of the age in which we live is its protective care of youth and adolescence. There is everywhere a strong and vital consciousness that the young are the builders and makers of the future. We have learned, and better late than never, that on them, and on what we can make of them in character and ideals, depend the health and welfare of society.

As the Old Testament is the record of the spiritual development of a peculiar race from slavery through savage and primitive conditions to a sublime height of moral and religious idealism, and is connected with the New by the appearance from that race of One in whom the Christian believer sees God's perfect witness to Himself, and even the sceptic recognises the perfection of human nature ; so too have those tattered flags, which, drooping from the pillars of the nave of St. Giles', epitomise Scotland's brave and troubled story, their real connection with the banners, fresh with the morning dew of hope and promise, which Youth has reverently placed within its newly-opened Shrine.

III

In our restless post-war years most established institutions have been made the targets of criticism. The Church has not escaped. In a period of acute mental and spiritual upheaval men find it difficult to preserve a balanced equipoise of thought. They tend to swing to extremes. There is an instinctive disposition to repudiate the past and to attack whatever is hallowed by antiquity, custom, or convention. Some, for instance, reacting violently from the horrors of the war, have

made vocal their conviction that the presence of regimental flags and military insignia within a Christian church is a travesty of the Gospel of Christ.

But there is surely some confused thinking here. Does the authorised version of the Bible, in which the Old Testament is bound up with the New, constitute by this partnership a travesty of the Gospel? On the contrary, the Old and the New, though dissimilar in atmosphere, make up a unity of progressive revelation. Does anyone feel it an offence to hear read in Christian worship the deeds of Joshua or the exploits of David, though neither of them evidenced in character or outlook the ethical or spiritual standards of Christ?

The war flags which are hung in St. Giles', in St. Mungo's, and in so many of our central churches are in no sense an illogical glorification of human bloodshed within the temples of the Prince of Peace. They hang there as living landmarks in the evolution of civilisation, as historic symbols, as memorials of significant episodes in the long struggle of humanity through pain and travail towards a better social order and a more adequate understanding of the mind and will of God.

If these regimental flags point backwards to a barbarous form of international arbitration from which the human race is slowly but inevitably departing, they also point forward to a more excellent way. It is only the fool who turns his back upon the past. The wise man looks back as well as forward, absorbing the lessons which the vanished years have taught, that he may learn the ways in which his own feet should walk. People will not look forward to posterity, said Burke, who never look backward to their ancestors. We can only prepare an adequate security for what is yet to come by giving due regard to what has gone before. If the future is the Bible of the free, the past is the textbook of the intelligent.

The military emblems preserved in our churches can justify their existence there on grounds not greatly dis-

similar to those advanced for the reading of much of the Old Testament in Christian worship, and its incorporation in the canonical word of God. Their value and purpose are historical, educative, calculated to impress upon men the steady advance of the divine purpose in the world, and also the continuity of religious and social development under the providential guidance of the Holy Spirit. Both, as regards their suggestiveness and appeal to our allegiance, are conditioned by the loftier ideals of a newer revelation.

IV

In St. Giles' the shot-riddled war flags in the nave are linked to the banners in the Shrine of Youth as successive chapters in one tremendous and thrilling story. Here, within these time-bleached walls, which themselves have known the assaults of fire and sword, has risen a new temple hung with banners dedicated not to war and carnage but to peace and goodwill among men.

This indeed is a landmark in social history, and it is the distinctive landmark of the twentieth century. It is the twentieth century that has given birth to a world-wide will to peace, and Youth is its most passionate advocate. The drum and the sword have lost their appeal. They have been drowned in a swelling tide of fellowship and service. Peace, friendship, brotherhood are the ideals to which every branch of the Youth Movement in this and other lands is consecrated, and are the ideals which it is convinced shall and must prevail.

The Great War profoundly affected the conscience of the civilised world. Those who bore the heat and burden of it are the most determined that such a thing shall never happen again. They more than any have concentrated on the training of the young to seek peace and ensue it. They do not repudiate the past; far less would they repudiate the flood of heroism, sacrifice,

and service which was poured out upon the altar of duty during the war, and which has left this nation reverent in the solemnising presence of a million graves.

Humbly and gratefully we salute our glorious dead ! There can be no repudiation of what our nation stood for during that the greatest crisis of its history. We stand by that, and we stand by the memory of those who died !

Nevertheless, we cannot forget that they have left us a sacred trust. They believed that they were fighting in the war that was to end war, and that by their death would come the gift of a new life to the world. We must fail them and betray them unless we genuinely strive to justify their faith. Significant it is that so many of the leaders of our victorious forces are to-day insistent in their appeal to men to follow after concord and goodwill ; significant that an honoured and distinguished soldier is the Boy Scouts' Chief.

But most significant of all is this, that within the Shrine of Youth in the Cathedral of Scotland's capital, and amid the banners of peace, will hang the Banner of the great soldier, Douglas Haig.

V

This is a thrilling and inspiring thing. And it suggests so much and so unexpectedly. One cannot look unmoved on Douglas Haig's Banner in that Shrine. Pass through the iron gates of the high oak screen—opened for the first time by his young son—that now separates the Shrine from the north aisle of the choir. It is all peace within. Every sign and symbol speaks of peace. Above the gates there glows in colour the emblem of the Holy Trinity, the perfect union of the Three in One, the goal and ideal of the human race whose destiny is to reflect in its common life that unity which already exists in the life of God.

From the central boss of the vaulted roof hangs the

Lamp of the Shrine, its four stained-glass panels depicting St. Andrew, St. Ninian, St. Columba, and St. Giles, peace-loving saints of Christendom. Above the Holy Table the beautiful carved and painted panel of the reredos portrays the Nativity Scene at Bethlehem, the choirs of angels, the beasts of the stall, the Star of the East, and in the centre the Blessed Mother and the Holy Child amid the fragrance of lilies and the rose of Sharon. "Gloria in excelsis Deo, et in terra pax"—so runs the inscription beneath.

And higher still, on the gilded canopy of the reredos, stands forth the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world.

Look where you will, on richly-embroidered frontal, or screen, or stalls, or gates, or reredos, or Holy Table, each sign and symbol speaks of the Christ, of His sacraments, His Church, His peace. This is the spiritual home provided for the Youth Movement in Edinburgh. This is the sanctuary in the common occupancy of which its various branches and organisations may realise more deeply their unity in a great ideal. And this is where his Banner of the Order of the Bath, Douglas Haig's Banner of knightly chivalry, has found its fitting and permanent home.

It hangs there not because he led our armies to victory in the Great War, but because, having led them to victory, he then strove to banish international hatreds and to lead his country and all nations to the paths of peace and goodwill. In the post-war years there was no greater healing influence upon the passions aroused by the years of strife than the voice and character of Douglas Haig. He cherished no enmity, he harboured no bitterness. He lived and acted as a great Christian gentleman.

Outside the arena of controversy and animosities he stood calm in his charity and forbearance, serene and self-possessed, a dignified and quiet figure, trusted and revered even by those who were his recent foes. It was

his faith that he had taken part in, and under God had assisted to bring to an end, the last great war in Europe. And he trusted his countrymen to help him to make that dream a reality. "Your work is now to make my work impossible!" So said he to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

And thus his Banner hangs in the Shrine, emblematic of the sacred trust he has committed to his nation, and guarded by the insignia of the youth of Scotland, who generation after generation will find in his character its high inspiration to sacrifice, brotherhood, and service. There is nothing in the Shrine of Youth, dedicated to peace and fellowship among men, more appropriate than the Banner of Douglas Haig !

VI

Something has been done in St. Giles' which has greatly appealed to the imagination of Scotland, and perhaps, ere long, the Shrine of Youth will be one of a widely-scattered family. We were not the first in the field. Chester Cathedral was before us, and in several other places in England the same idea has for some time been in evidence. But we are confident that the Shrine in St. Giles' is first in beauty, and is not likely, however the movement may develop, to lose this place.

Those who believe in its purpose and idealism hope that this movement will capture Scotland. They dream of other shrines arising, uniting together the youth of the nation, drawing Youth to the Church and the Church to Youth, perhaps in St. Mungo's, in the Abbey of Paisley, in the Cathedral of Dunblane, in the noble Collegiate Church of Perth, in the old Church of Stirling, in the West Kirk of Aberdeen, in St. Mary's, Dundee ! And possibly, so dream the dreamers, not only will the shrines at length arise in our larger central churches, but in every church throughout the length and breadth of Scotland.

In the humblest country kirk, in the most obscure town charge, could not a corner be found somewhere in the building where the youth of the congregation—Boys' Brigade, Girls' Guildry, Scouts, Guides, or whatever be their organisation ; and why indeed should not each Sunday School have a banner of its own ?—might hang their colours or other emblems, and so form a Shrine and feel and know the divine presence and blessing amid their enthusiasms and enterprise ?

Those who dream this dream think that it is one worth dreaming ; and sometimes dreams have a wonderful way of coming true !

THE REVIVAL OF WORSHIP IN THE SCOTTISH CHURCH

*Address delivered to the Scottish Ecclesiological Society,
at Glasgow, 8th March 1930*

I

By the year 1689 the long and embittered struggle between bishop and presbyter in Scotland had come to an end and the Church was finally established by law upon a presbyterian basis. Those of the clergy who still clung tenaciously to the episcopal form of church government were driven out, though in some districts with difficulty and after a considerable number of years. Since victorious ecclesiasticism is seldom either imaginative or merciful, they were subjected to much persecution, though for the returning presbyterians it may be said in extenuation that the privations of their homeless wanderings over hill and moorland and the horrors which many of them had witnessed had bitten deep into their souls. Indeed, for a time it seemed as if Scottish Episcopacy was on the verge of complete annihilation, and it remained an attenuated remnant till 1792, when at last, with the goodwill of the Church of Scotland, its legal disabilities were finally removed. But in many of its ideals, customs, and preferences the Established Church had departed from the spirit of the early Scottish Reformers, and now reflected more of the outward garb of English Nonconformity than of that robust and catholic-minded institution which, loyal to the best traditions of historic Christendom, had been moulded by John Knox, Andrew Melville, and others during the troubles of the Reformation era.

In the first half of the eighteenth century the condition of the Scottish churches was shocking and scandalous, a situation which did not arise owing to the advent of Presbyterianism but which had its beginnings during the episcopal regime. Though in 1690 the financial responsibility for the upkeep of church, manse, and glebe was by law imposed upon the heritors, little or nothing was done by them to stem the tide of decay, and matters steadily grew worse. Here and there ministers and kirk sessions made some attempt to preserve their forlorn church buildings from further dilapidations by enjoining parishioners to bring their contributions of stone, wood, and thatch, and themselves to undertake repairs, but such amateur patch-work was largely ineffectual.

The average country church was incommodious, narrow, gloomy, rain-sodden, and often thoroughly insanitary, its floor level frequently sunk several feet below the surrounding graveyard. The floors were of earth or clay, and it is on record that in some of the older buildings in the north which had been used as places of sepulture the bones of the dead obtruded above the muddy surface among the feet of the worshippers. The roofs, which often leaked badly, were of turf or heather. In a poverty-stricken country, straw was too valuable to the farmer to be used for such a purpose. There was no attempt at heating, and the windows were few and very small. The people worshipped in shivering discomfort amid an atmosphere which was squalid and unwholesome.

Some of the fine pre-Reformation churches had survived, but in course of time when the roofs of these also gave way a rough covering of turf came in place of the former lead or stone. The interiors of such were invariably defaced. Their graceful architecture was hacked and destroyed by the knocking out of rude doorways or miserably-designed new windows or the erection of galleries or lofts. With the exception of the

stalls at King's College, Aberdeen, and Dunblane Cathedral, and the doors of the rood-screen at Fowlis Easter, there are few relics of pre-Reformation wood-work left in Scotland. Such was the defective condition of church fabrics even in the larger cities, that we learn from Henry Gray Graham that in the middle of the century the black skull-cap which the minister of St. Cuthbert's, Edinburgh, wore upon his head was in winter often smeared with a "thin glaister o' sifted snaw."

In the second half of the century there was some improvement, but the statistical accounts of Scotland at its close are still filled with the complaints of the ministers as to the "unhealthy," "ruinous," "filthy," and frequently "unsafe" condition of their churches. Thomas Pennant after his tour in Scotland had stated in 1775 that in many parts of that country Christ was still worshipped in a stable, and a wretched one at that. We find this sort of declaration as late as 1792 : "With us, in the Church of Scotland, many of our country kirks are such dark, damp, dirty hovels as to chill and repulse every sentiment of devotion ; they besides endanger the health of every class of worshippers."

Pews began to replace stools as the century advanced, and ere long this practice became general. But the fixed seats did not effect any improvement upon the devotional attitude of the worshippers, who during the era of the "cutty stool" had formed grossly irreverent habits. During the sermon they wore their hats or bonnets, they stood or sat or lounged at both praise and prayer just as they felt inclined, they spat among the puddles on the floor. This unseemly behaviour, however, it is well to remember, was not characteristic of the presbyterians alone. The episcopalians before them had evidenced an equal irreverence, and Archbishop Leighton had without result endeavoured in genuine distress to wean his people to some semblance of decorum in the public worship of God.

The clergy, who themselves entered their pulpits wearing their hats, which they did not remove until they had solemnly bowed to all the heritors in turn, indulged in devotional exercises and a style of preaching which in their inordinate length and extravagance of utterance to us sound fantastic and incredible, but which were in strict conformity with the standards of the times. To prepare a prayer beforehand was a practice which fell in the category of deliberate sin, and a written sermon was considered as heinous an offence. Amid the strange incongruities of an uncouth age, to which both Sir Walter Scott and John Galt bear witness, church services in Scotland sank to what Principal Story described as probably the baldest and rudest to be found in the Christian world.

II

English Puritanism and the political influence of English Nonconformity had done much to subvert the aims and ideals of the early Scottish Reformers, who, though passionately repudiating Rome and all its errors, visualised no such disorderly future for the worship of the Church of Scotland. Andrew Melville, the most outstanding figure of Presbyterianism, was in his ecclesiastical outlook what we should to-day describe as a convinced and determined High Churchman. The spirit of the seventeenth-century English Independents crept northwards across the Tweed and heavily leavened Scottish religious life. Cromwell, too, lent his personal assistance with a coarse disregard of ecclesiastical order and decency which his detestation of both Presbyterianism and Episcopacy did nothing to allay.

Political Puritanism had only a short lease of life in the seventeenth century, though it began to revive as a power in the nineteenth ; but religious Puritanism, imported from England (though like Presbyterianism

a development from Calvinism, yet in its general atmosphere at first quite foreign to Scottish ideas), once having gripped the presbyterian mind, suffered no set-back at the Restoration as in England, but held uninterrupted sway for a couple of centuries.

It is mere folly to underrate its value and its virtues or to minimise its lasting and beneficent contribution to Scottish character. From it the Scottish race derived its stern sense of personal and public duty, its disposition to constant and watchful thrift, its passionate loyalty to hearth and home. Through it, too, the race was inoculated with a methodical orderliness of living and a dour mental dignity. But to a great extent Puritanism drove from life its colour and its charm, and nowhere did this hit Scotland with greater severity than in the public worship of its Kirk. This, sincerely directed at first towards simplicity and a search for pure spiritual reality, soon fell away from its high idealism and slithered down into a stagnant morass of unkemptness and neglect.

The bald crudity of its worship and the bleak ugliness of its churches were not native to our soil or born in the Scottish mind. They were imposed upon the Kirk by an alien influence.

III

Let us now look at the Scottish Church in the early decades of the nineteenth century.

The disreputable conditions of the eighteenth century had been considerably mitigated, and the heritors were now compelled to face up to their obligations. Slate roofs were replacing turf and heather, and the churches were at least brought within the margins of safety and sanitation. But they remained invariably bare and unlovely. The heritors, discovering that an atrophied public taste asked for nothing better, improved the shining hour and, when compelled to erect a new church or to reconstruct an old one, embarked upon

the cheapest form of undecorative austerity that the ingenuity of architects could devise.

There were of course exceptions as there are exceptions to every rule, and some evidences remain indicative of attempts at a sombre dignity; but in the popular estimate a church was merely a meeting-house to hold a congregation. Four walls and a roof were sufficient for this purpose, and four walls and a roof is the architectural description of innumerable buildings still in our midst, the dismal legacy of a former and unimaginative age.

So far as any distinctive Christian symbolism was concerned, there was nothing in these buildings which would have rendered them unsuitable as the temples of either a Jew or a Mohammedan, save that neither Hebraism nor Islam would for a moment have tolerated such interiors. Though the sanctuaries of a definitely sacramental Church, sacramental furniture was unknown. For Holy Baptism a bowl from the manse scullery was often good enough, and for the very occasional celebration of the Holy Communion any odd table was sufficient as a makeshift. Many churches, indeed, had their pews so constructed that on Communion Sundays the whole area could be transformed into an extension of the Holy Table, a very moving piece of symbolism whose disappearance, though necessary under changing circumstances, many of us must regret. But when the Sacrament was over and the church area readjusted to its normal condition, there remained no permanent table to witness to the Sacrifice of Christ.

Neither were there any stained glass, instrumental music, embroideries, carving, or colour. Ornamentation was kept at bay by an iconoclastic bigotry, and innovations were sincerely and honestly feared as the weapons of the Devil. The church furniture consisted of the pews, generally designed with a subtle instinct for physical discomfort, and the pulpit of enormous

proportions towering over the precentor's squat desk. As for the services, they were as an almost invariable rule wholly devoid of taste or dignity. The pulpit devotions, the first prayer sometimes lasting from thirty to forty minutes, were an exhaustive survey of the whole field of orthodoxy from the Fall of Man to the Last Judgment; and the sermons, of at least an hour's duration, were generally a repetition of the subject-matter of the prayers on a more flamboyant and incomprehensible scale. The reading of the Holy Scriptures as a part of public worship was universally neglected.

But it is only right to note that in spite of all this the Church in its teaching had remained true to its high sacramental doctrines, and the very infrequency of the celebration of Holy Communion testified to the profound reverence and awe in which it was consistently held. This habit of infrequent communion, however, was a later and unfortunate departure from the practice of the early Reformers, who approved of a monthly celebration; and indeed one of the protests of the Scottish Reformation was against the fact that under the Roman regime the people had ceased to communicate with any regularity, and for the most part received the sacrament only once a year, at Easter.

IV

Towards the middle of the nineteenth century the renaissance of presbyterian worship began. To many it became increasingly clear that in the ordinances of the sanctuary the holiness of beauty was a matter of moment no less than the beauty of holiness. Here and there tentative efforts were made to secure an improvement in church architecture, to modify the prevailing baldness of worship, to ensure greater attention as regards choirs and music, and generally to create a more elevated aesthetic ideal.

In 1849 Principal Lee and others presented to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland a successful overture for the preparation of forms of service for use in the Highlands and Islands and the overseas Colonies, where ministers were frequently unobtainable. This was important as the first step in liturgics since Presbyterianism had departed from Knox's Book of Common Order. It led, too, to an Act of Assembly in 1856 enjoining the reading of the Holy Scriptures in public worship, and three years later to the appointment by the Assembly of a Committee on Aids to Devotion. George, eighth Duke of Argyle, published in 1849 his *Presbytery Examined*, in which he advocated many reforms; and while he aroused criticism and opposition, he at all events compelled the Church at large to think.

The movement, as a movement, was still barely perceptible, and innovations upon contemporary usage appeared but slowly. Occasional straws, however, revealed to the observant the direction in which the stream was running.

The first real step was taken by Principal Marshall Lang when minister of the East Church of Aberdeen, which incumbency he held from 1856 to 1859. The irregular laxities in deportment among worshippers, characteristic of the eighteenth century, had long since been systematised into a uniform practice. The people everywhere now sat during praise and stood to pray. At Aberdeen Dr. Lang introduced the custom of standing at praise, whereat his presbytery, fearful for the safety of true religion, fell upon him and forced him to return to use and wont. Shortly afterwards the young innovator was translated to the newly-built church of Anderston, Glasgow, where, since there was as yet no congregation to object, he was successful in introducing an organ. At the same time another was daringly erected in St. Andrew's, Glasgow—which church had actually made this experiment so early as

1812, when a portable organ was carried in at the afternoon service and played to accompany the concluding psalm ; but strong opposition rose from the Town Council, and the practice was discontinued.

Now, the organ in St. Andrew's had come to stay ; and soon amid a tempest of fanatical opposition other more enlightened ministers and congregations defiantly followed the example.

V

The year 1857 was one of moment. Old Greyfriars' Church, Edinburgh, which perished by fire in 1845, was reopened for public worship, and its minister, Dr. Robert Lee, introduced some startling novelties. His great crusade for the reformation of worship lasted ten years, during which time he wrote voluminously on liturgics, instituted the use of a prayer-book in his church, introduced a harmonium in 1863 and an organ in 1865, and induced his people to kneel at prayer and stand at praise.

The outburst of popular indignation with which his efforts were greeted was terrific in its cataractal denunciation, and Lee, who had added to the sin of "ritualism" the crime of Broad Churchmanship, was literally persecuted into his grave. The row was in full swing and the Greyfriars' case pending before the General Assembly, when in May 1867 the victim, stricken with paralysis, fell from his horse in Princes Street. After lingering incapacitated for two years, he escaped beyond the reach of his calumniators' voices.

But his cause was not allowed to perish. In 1865 the Church Service Society was formed by a small coterie of distinguished men consecrated to the ideals of dignity and reverence. To the work of this society the Church of Scotland and Presbyterianism at large owe an incalculable debt, and those who were its originators paid dearly for their faith and courage. They were scoffed at and abused, suspected and thwarted, and, worse,

were boycotted and penalised. Many a promising career was ruined by the mere whisper of the word "ritualist."

The feeling of the times may be gauged when we remember that Dr. Muir of St. Stephen's, Edinburgh, in 1866 refused to allow Dr. A. K. H. Boyd to occupy his pulpit on the ground of his association with the innovators ; and that Dr. Veitch of St. Cuthbert's could solemnly write a pamphlet proving a direct connection between the movement for the introduction of organs and the menace of that deadly rationalism and atheistic infidelity which was threatening all Europe. As late as 1870 the Scottish Hymnal, our first hymn-book, was passed by the General Assembly only after a stormy debate.

Principal Marshall Lang was among the first to attempt to present some tangible token of a greater reverence for the Memorial of the Saviour's love by giving prominence to a permanent Communion Table. About 1874, when minister of Morningside, he made an apse with the Holy Table in the centre and the pulpit at the side. This may not have been the first of its kind. Dr. Cooper said that he remembered a central Holy Table at St. Vigean's in 1870. Other churches may have had before that time a table of sorts reserved for the celebration of the Holy Communion in front of the pulpit—St. Mary's Church at St. Andrews had one from the sixties—but, if so, they were few. After Morningside, however, quite a number followed ere long with a similar arrangement. This style of church interior became steadily more general, till to-day few new churches are built which do not possess a chancel.

The custom, now very common, of using a prayer-desk and lectern for the devotions, and the pulpit solely for the preaching of the Word, was inaugurated at Burnbank, Lanarkshire, in 1880. Six years later we find the example being followed at St. Margaret's, Broughty Ferry. Govan began to observe the practice

in 1888 under Dr. John Macleod. The Barony of Glasgow, to which Dr. Marshall Lang had been translated, the East Church of Aberdeen, St. Cuthbert's, Edinburgh, and Rosneath were the next in the van, and all before 1895.

The first robed choir to be seen in presbyterian Scotland since the Reformation appeared at St. Oswald's (Woodside), Glasgow, in 1882. It consisted of boys and men who were uniformed in black gowns and cassocks. For many years this choir as regards its dress, which later was elaborated, remained in unique isolation ; but in time the example was followed elsewhere. Robed choirs may now be found in St. Giles', St. Cuthbert's, and St. George's, Edinburgh ; St. Columba's, London ; Paisley Abbey ; St. Paul's, Greenock, and in sundry other places.

By the close of the nineteenth century the battle was won, and prosecutions for so-called ritualism practically ceased in the ecclesiastical courts. There has now been none for five-and-twenty years. The services of the sanctuary were generally raised to a higher standard of reverence, a process which is still continuing ; and, doubtless due to some extent to the founding in 1892 of the Scottish Church Society, the sacraments were rescued from a latitudinarian decline which for some time had been apparent. A new interest was aroused also in the historic order of presbyters as constituting a true and valid ministry within the Catholic Church.

All over the country our ancient cathedrals and abbeys, not to speak of innumerable smaller churches, have been brought under the hand of the restorer. In some cases their renovation has been admirably executed, but in others, some of which were restored just a little too soon, the results have not been so satisfactory. The restoration of an ancient church whose every stone is precious and irreplaceable, and where one false step can wreak untold damage upon an architectural treasure, is an undertaking which requires

on the part of those who embark upon it a peculiar restraint, a constant watchfulness, and a capacity to sacrifice preferences and inclinations upon the altar of historic truth. It is a work to be entered upon not lightly, nor inadvisedly, but with a due and sober recognition of the many pitfalls and dangers which lie in wait for the unwary. It is fatally easy to make mistakes and most difficult and frequently impossible to rectify them when once they have been made. Many a noble and historic church in Scotland has been permanently defaced by the unwise decisions of those responsible for the renovation of its fabric.

VI

We need not dwell on the persecution and vindictive hostility which were meted out to those daring souls who rescued the Scottish Church from the coarse and vulgar laxities which had invaded its temples. It is a disagreeable story and makes unpleasant reading. Only, let us who live in more mellow days remember with gratitude those who fought the battle for us and through whose sacrifice and suffering we now possess a more enlightened heritage. Other men laboured, and we have entered into their labours. Though the uninformed may here and there cling to such meaningless phrases, the fruit of ignorance and prejudice, intelligent people no longer refer to a "presbyterian" service, or, in connection with architecture and furniture, to a "presbyterian" church. They know now, in the words of the *Church of Scotland Year-Book*, that "Presbyterianism, like Episcopacy and Congregationalism, refers to the government of the Church, and not to doctrine or ritual."

We are now at liberty to use the ministries of architecture, music, and a liturgical and ordered worship. The problem that confronts us is, what are we going to do with them? On this may I make a few observations?

First of all, we Scottish presbyterians are neither Socinians nor sectaries. We belong to a definitely sacramental Church claiming its place in rightful succession in the universal Church of God. In our worship, therefore, the Christian sacraments must naturally have their fitting and venerated recognition. The Holy Communion is the centre of our faith and worship, and Zwinglianism with its bleak and barren conceptions is as much a contradiction of our historic standards as is the materialism of the Roman doctrine of Transubstantiation. Within the temples of Presbyterianism it is thus only right and proper that the Holy Table should be prominently exhibited. Doctrinally as well as aesthetically it should afford a climax as the supreme object toward which the eye of the worshipper is led.

That blessed trysting-place, gathered around which, in fellowship with one living Lord, the Church on earth is united with the Church Triumphant, is surely one which is not worthily recognised by an article of furniture obscure, or cheap, or mean. And not to have a Communion Table in a Christian church, or, having one, to treat it in a slovenly fashion as a depositary for hymn-books or other litter, is hardly less than culpable irreverence among those who subscribe to such views concerning the Sacrament as are embodied in our Confession of Faith.

If we think of it dispassionately, that table on which is commemorated the great Sacrifice of Christ is surely a more fitting symbol for the eye of the worshipper to rest upon than those phalanxes of glittering organ pipes with which we so frequently cover the pulpit end of our churches and so unjustifiably and irrationally exalt. What doctrinal truth or spiritual conception does an organ-pipe connote? The only argument in its favour is that it symbolises the sacrifice of praise, and that is not convincing.

We must remember that human nature in the average is childlike, and does require the aid of externals.

Symbolism, though like other things it may be easily abused, has its legitimate place, and we, a strongly intellectual Church, are sometimes in danger of forgetting it. In this connection these recent words of Dr. Archibald Fleming are pertinent: "Reverence for signs significant of holy things is happily growing in Scotland. Reverent demeanour in church, for example. Sir D. Y. Cameron is said to have protested against the use of churches for secular entertainments. One might make a like protest with regard to the uses (which sometimes make one shudder) to which Communion Tables are occasionally put. Indeed, there are places—fortunately becoming few—where the having of any special Holy Table at all is thought unnecessary. Reverence for symbols, so far from being idolatrous, is a reassuring indication of reverence for what they symbolise. A woman does not worship her wedding ring when she counts it the most sacred of all her possessions. In treasuring with reverence his mother's Bible, a son does not worship the tattered binding and the faded leaves that constitute the book."

An ecclesiastical building should in the order and arrangement of its interior be suggestive of Christian truth, as illustrations in a volume emphasise particular episodes of the story. By placing the Holy Table in a central position—as the Cross and empty tomb to which it directs our thoughts are central in our faith—with pulpit, prayer-desk, and lectern arranged on either side, and the font also situated in a place of prominence, we thereby impress on the minds of worshippers the basic facts which underlie their worship, namely, the sacraments, the ministry of prayer, the preaching of the Gospel, and the reading of the Word.

VII

Secondly, ornamentation in churches should be carefully limited to what is calculated to symbolise some

definite Christian truth. This ought to be the condition attached to every attempt towards an aesthetic appeal. We must avoid striving after mere effect, and ruthlessly exclude any suggestion of what is garish, tawdry, or bizarre. Simplicity is always synonymous with dignity. The mediæval practice of covering with brilliant primary colours not only walls, roof, and portions of the woodwork such as screens, but even outside doorways, is not likely ever again to come into favour, nor is it desirable that it should. I would like to see whitewash everywhere victorious over those gaudy paints and sentimental stencillings which, I suppose, are intended as an imitation of the mediæval decoration. People who are afraid of whitewashing the interiors of churches, and who resort to paint in order to secure warmth and effect, should give whitewash a trial. They would be amazed at the charm of the result.

But of course colour is not to be abandoned. We have great need of it as well. Yet whenever we use it, let us be careful to see that it means something and serves some illustrative purpose. I should like to see good pictures restored to the walls of our ecclesiastical buildings and the Church again become the friend and patron of the artist. If a stained-glass window is legitimate, so must be a picture, and other forms of decorative art also, such as frescoes, sculpture, and mosaic. There is no logical distinction, though stained glass has been the only form of art expression which up till now has won a secure position in the Church of Scotland, or in which the Church has taken any interest. That interest, however, has generally been indifferent and disastrously ill-informed. The advent of the genius of Douglas Strachan has brought us, with something of a sense of shock, to recognise how greatly our churches have suffered by the indiscriminate introduction of windows which in conception, design, and execution were nothing short of deplorable.

Representations of scenes from the life of our Lord

on a background of whitewash, or, where obtainable, in mosaic, would be more effective in devotional and spiritual results than the meaningless and often thoroughly barbaric decorations in paint and gilt which uninformed house-painters are frequently permitted to splash over the walls of our churches. It is a serious reflection upon the Church that such should be accepted or tolerated, and is evidence that, despite our vaunted modern enlightenment, we have something to learn from the age that produced Giotto.

We may, I trust, live to see the day when dignified canvases and other creations in decorative art delineating great religious themes will again find a welcome within our temples. Only one picture, so far as I know, has survived to us from ancient times, namely, the painting on oak boards of the Crucifixion in the Parish Church of Fowlis Easter. The same church has also preserved a pre-Reformation piece of eleven oak panels on each of which is the painted figure of a saint or an apostle. In recent years a fine canvas was accepted by the kirk session of Paisley Abbey and hung within their noble church. The walls of St. Oswald's (Woodside), Glasgow, were long ago covered with frescoes, the work of a former minister, the Reverend David Watson, an enthusiastic member of this Society and well known to you all. Mosaics are more and more being introduced, and are becoming increasingly popular. In all this there is involved no question of doctrine. It is a question merely of devotional aesthetics. We must, of course, be very much on our guard lest a search for mere beauty leads us into error. No picture, sign, or symbol should be used in a church dedicated to the worship of the Reformed Faith which does not stand for something in which we actually believe and which is not in conformity with our doctrinal standards. Otherwise it becomes a false aestheticism and a negation of truth.

But is it not a lamentable reflection that a Church

which adores the God of beauty, truth, and goodness should for almost four centuries have afforded little or no patronage to the artist? Were the Church to become a recognised depositary of high religious art we might reasonably hope to see in our midst the rise of a new school of great painters of devotional subjects in which the spirit of Raphael, Fra Angelico, Perugino, and Botticelli would live again, and which would act as an influential corrective to the secular tendencies of the age. It is idle and insincere to talk of art as the handmaid of religion, which it surely is, while we rigorously exclude its noblest creations and conceptions from our temples.

The Church's aim should be to direct and consecrate artistic achievement to the glory of God and to encourage it by its patronage and blessing. Holding as I do a high appreciation of the work of the artist as a cultural and spiritualising influence in our common life, and regarding with respect the honesty and devotion with which he pursues his elusive quest for reality, truth, and beauty, I feel it to be discreditable to Scotland and its Church that few of that very unworldly brotherhood can ever know the inspiration of the thought that what he may create may eventually find a resting-place within the House of God.

I do not believe that this gulf between the Church and Art will remain for ever unbridged. It is too artificial and unreal, too opposed to fundamental religious instincts. Sooner or later the day will come when without sacrifice of any principle, but owing to the sacrifice of much unreasonable prejudice, the artist will find in the Church his patron and his friend, and within its temples, for his nobler works, a desired and cherished home.

VIII

Thirdly, the modern cult of the organ is apt to lead to considerable abuse. One would like to see a quiet

dignity the chief characteristic of presbyterian worship, and in my view we are not only overdoing the musical part of our service but are introducing things that are entirely unjustified by the rules of sound liturgics. In some places, for instance, one hears in the midst of the solemn prayer of our Communion service the choir break forth into a choral rendering of the Sanctus. This to me appears quite out of place. It is not our custom to have choral celebrations—and many who love the quiet sincerity and unadorned order of the presbyterian form of Holy Communion hope that it never will be—and therefore, while it is most desirable that the people should repeat the words of the Sanctus with the minister, it certainly should not be sung. And, what is worse, I have heard the Sanctus sung by the choir before an evening service as a musical accompaniment to the entry of the minister. There can be no justification for this sort of thing. Liturgically, the Sanctus is an integral part of the Communion office, and save in very exceptional circumstances should not be wrested from its context.

Ornate musical services are most undesirable save in the greater churches which can command high musical talent, and even there they ought to be vigilantly watched and held in severe restraint. You cannot reproduce a cathedral service in a simple country kirk, nor can you reproduce the beautiful simplicity of a country kirk in a cathedral. Let each be content with its own, both having their peculiar dignity. When you try to mix them you only get a poor result which is neither one thing nor another. Showy and ostentatious worship is an offence against good taste and is detrimental to true religion.

The ideal towards which we ought to strive is intelligent congregational participation in the service, and the chanting or intoning by the choir of the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, or responses is in my opinion not to be commended anywhere either in a cathedral or in a

kirk, and certainly it should not be on a note higher than E flat. It merely serves to silence the congregation, and nothing can be more moving or inspiring than the sound of many voices united in a common act of faith or supplication.

Let us beware of anthems. They have, I suppose, their own place, though what it is I am not quite sure. At all events, they have frequently proved to be a curse and not a blessing. A church is not a hall for a sacred concert, and a choir's first function is to lead the people in their praise. We are told that the anthems serve to interest choristers in their work, but even the best choir has quite as much to do as it is likely to overtake in creating a good standard of congregational singing. We have a rich heritage in our metrical psalms and paraphrases, many of them by immemorial custom associated with stately and distinctive tunes which are precious to every Scottish heart. Since the Reformation the metrical psalms have been the peculiar praise of the Scottish Church, and the paraphrases by now have also a long and hallowed history. We owe to these a loyalty greater than to any hymn-book, however modern and revised. In my view, no morning service is complete without at least one metrical psalm and one paraphrase.

I should like to see the general restoration to our public worship of the congregational repetition of the Lord's Prayer, and indeed also of the Apostles' Creed. It is foolish to regard the latter as if it were the peculiar possession of the Anglican Church. It may not be either wholly adequate or satisfactory as a statement of belief, but it is the best we have, and it has been in use in Scotland for eleven hundred years. What could be more natural than that a congregation of Christian people gathered for corporate worship should confidently make confession of that faith in which we glory and which was once delivered to the saints? Its restoration to our services would be but a return to

the practice of the Reformation era. It was to satisfy the strong English Puritan opposition in the Westminster Assembly, generated by the Brownists, that the Scottish representatives, though with serious reluctance, eventually agreed to drop the Lord's Prayer and the Creed from the worship of their national Church. At the same time, and for the same reason, they surrendered on the question of singing the Doxology at the end of the portions of the metrical psalms, a practice which had been begun in Scotland as early as 1562, as we know from the question which Winzet put to the Reformers—"Why use you to sing at the end of every psalm, Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost?" How profoundly these surrenders to English demands were felt by the Scottish presbyterians may be gauged from the impassioned protest of Calderwood, the historian, who when the dropping of the Doxology came up for discussion, and unable to brook any further capitulation to alien prejudice, rose in the Assembly at Westminster and cried, "Let *that* alone, for I hope to sing it in heaven."

IX

The Presbyterian Church, as many circumstances and tendencies clearly indicate, is steadily moving towards some form of a liturgy. When that comes it will be a composite thing, like Knox's Book of Common Order, with forms which are partly fixed and at the same time considerable freedom left for the use of extempore prayer. But its eventual advent, though it will not be immediate, seems inevitable. Meanwhile the layman would do the Church a service if instead of discouraging he would encourage the minister to read his prayers, should the latter feel it best to do so. Many men have not the gift of public prayer—though where that gift is possessed nothing can be more solemnising and uplifting—and such should certainly resort to the

best books of devotion, so that the worshippers may find their thoughts and feelings given utterance in the glowing words of masters of religious expression rather than in the halting and nervous words of a pastor in whom, though he be an excellent man and a splendid minister, this peculiar flame does not burn.

There is nothing in the practice of reading prayers in church worship which is at variance with our tradition. John Knox did so and gave our Church a sound prayer-book, the use of which in "prayers" (that is, at the principal Sunday service), marriage, and the ministration of the sacraments was enjoined by the ecclesiastical law from 1564 to 1645, when it was superseded by the Westminster Directory. The discarding by the Presbyterian Church of this discretionary liturgy with which it began its Reformation career was an act of irreflective folly for which it has paid dearly. We should never have lost a prayer-book but for the ill-advised attempt of Charles I. to force upon a country imbued with a passionate sense of nationality a liturgy which, though drafted by Scottish bishops, was revised by and associated with the name of a much-suspected Anglican archbishop—a piece of obstinate stupidity which led to the association in the Scottish mind of all fixed liturgical forms with the meddlesome interference of the secular authority.

In our public prayer we ministers ought to avoid rambling and irrelevance. One has heard devotions filled with repetition and phraseology that could carry no possible meaning to the average worshipper. No man would have written such at his study desk had he had quiet and leisure earnestly to put it down in black and white and thereafter carefully to revise it. And it would appear futile to suggest that a minister should actually take the trouble to do this and afterwards laboriously commit his words to memory. Why should he waste his time like that? Can there indeed be any reasoned objection to his reading in church the prayers

that he has written and prepared, and thus making his congregation secure in the knowledge that in phrases which are the best fruit of his mind and heart he will lead them to the throne of God?

It is a wise and helpful thing to study carefully the liturgies which are the common heritage of the Catholic Church, and so far as possible to base our language and expression upon them and on the words of Holy Scripture. To attempt improvements on the historic collects is indefensible, and it is as unworthy to misquote Chrysostom as it is to mangle Shakespeare. Whether a man reads his prayers or not, it is only seemly and fitting that at any rate he should most carefully prepare his words before leading his people to the footstool of the Almighty. And in the House of God people have a right to expect to hear our noble English language at its best, and not abused with a cheap sentimentality which often creeps into "extempore" prayer, or that uncultured slangy idiom which has invaded the sermons of many "popular" preachers, of whom some, forgetting the traditions of the Scottish pulpit, do not hesitate to attempt to attract audiences by descending to the level of the buffoon and cracking jokes as they declare the august message of God's salvation.

It is, or ought to be, a duty on the part of a minister to eschew slovenliness in attitude and demeanour as he stands within the temple as the representative of God. Some are careless as to their robes and personal appearance in church who would be most meticulous in such matters were they summoned to appear before His Majesty at a Holyroodhouse levee. Surely an approach to the King of Kings should demand an unusual reverence and care. Again, it is not elevating to see a minister himself seated while his people stand at praise. It looks lazy, as indeed it is. If it be put forward that he requires these moments in which to collect his thoughts, the reply is that he should most certainly be prepared and self-collected before

he enters the church. The minister is there to lead the worship of his people and not to dissociate himself from it.

We should try also to avoid foolish and irritating phrases, such as, "Let us sing the hundredth psalm, from the beginning." If not otherwise announced, where else would the psalm begin? The same applies to the intimation of the portions of Holy Scripture which are to be read as the lessons for the day. Another offensive practice is that of intimating the final praise by saying, "Let us conclude our service by singing . . ." The service is not thus concluded; the conclusion of the service is marked by the solemn pronouncing of the Benediction. There are endless things of this kind which one constantly hears on the lips of the clergy.

The greater festivals of the Christian year should be observed and emphasised. There is no surer method of education in the cardinal truths of Christendom. If there are Christian people who do not really know what Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost stand for—and such do exist among us—it is not their fault but the fault of the clergy who are supposed to be their teachers. The ignorance of the rising generation as regards the elementary doctrines of Christianity is sufficient to cause grave anxiety to those who have the good of the Church at heart. The observance of the Christian year can do much to counteract this.

X

In the matter of the general improvement of worship many of us, I am convinced, are unreasonably moving in a vicious circle. Not a few ministers suffer from the superstition that all laymen are old-fashioned and reactionary and would resist any innovation. Thus, unwilling to wound feelings or cause dispeace, they often hesitate to remove old-standing abuses, and con-

form to practices of which they themselves cannot approve. From my experience of the eldership I am persuaded that this is sheer hallucination. The layman, I discover, is sometimes in advance of the minister in desiring the introduction of a greater dignity and reverence to the worship of the sanctuary.

But the layman also hesitates to move. He feels diffident in making suggestions to the minister, whose peculiar responsibility it is to order and conduct the church services. Nor is it to be expected that the layman should know as much of the history of our Church and the traditions of worship as the minister, and some clergymen, impetuous and thoughtless, fail to secure improvement by foolishly introducing novelties without giving any reason or explanation. I am fully aware that the law of our Church leaves the conduct of worship entirely in the hands of the minister. But in making changes of importance it is wise, and indeed only courteous, for him to take his kirk session with him.

The minister will find as an almost invariable rule that in such matters his elders will be interested and sympathetic if informed, regarding innovations, as to their origin and history, how and when they first appeared in public worship, what purpose they are supposed to serve, what they represent and symbolise, how and in what way they are part of our heritage and are justified in Reformed usage.

Let us, ministers and office-bearers, try to work more together and to show towards each other a spirit of mutual trust and confidence. We are all of us seeking the one objective, and that is the furthering of the glory of God. It is incumbent upon us who bear office in the Church to be ready to welcome new light and better things whenever such appear. We must adapt ourselves to changing circumstances and remember that some things which served a bygone age may be obsolete and ineffective in our own. But we must preserve a

sense of right values. Beautiful churches and dignified services are not ends in themselves. They are but means to an end, which is the creation of an atmosphere best suited for the growth and development of the soul.

XI

In conclusion, may I suggest that the time has come when Presbyterianism should make some real attempt to induce architects to produce a form of normal church more suited to the special requirements of our type of worship than the traditional Gothic or Norman plan? One would not like to see these noble styles of Christian building fall into disuse, but perhaps we might with advantage turn our thoughts more frequently to the architectural ideas embodied in the temples of the ancient Greeks, and to those which found expression in many of the historic Italian churches which hold vast congregations and are unsurpassed as preaching centres. Proud as we justly are of our cathedrals, abbeys, and larger pre-Reformation churches, we have never been able to use them or inhabit them adequately. Nor indeed has the Church of England, even with its more elaborate ceremonial. They were built for purposes wholly different from those to which we of the Reformed Faith put them; and while superbly suited to the floating properties of the Gregorian intonation and the esoteric ritual of the Mass, they became increasingly ineffective as the evangelical tradition arose with its emphasis upon the preaching of the Gospel.

As regards the ordinary parish church, I would suggest that the body or nave of the building should, while conceived and designed in that spirit of awe and adoration which befits the erection of a Christian temple, be built primarily as an auditorium with special regard to acoustics, while the east end should be provided with a broad but only moderately deep chancel, with a spacious apse beyond in the centre of

whose chord would stand the Holy Table. The walls of the body of the church, as I have already observed, might provide a background for mural frescoes or the hanging of noble canvases.

The choristers should be placed in the best position possible for the leading of the congregational praise; but they should not be in the chancel, and ought to be removed from the line of vision of the worshipper as he looks towards the Holy Table. I should like to see pews where possible give place to movable chairs, and these spaced in such a manner as to make it possible to kneel for prayer.

Some have suggested that the nave or body of the church might be used occasionally, but of course reverently and with scrupulous care, for devotional purposes other than those connected with public worship. It is submitted, for instance, that if at Christmas or Easter the children of the congregation or Sunday school should give, as the children of my Sunday school frequently do, the performance of some religious play, this might take place in the nave of the church. In St. Giles' for a considerable time the children have had their Christmas Tree in the nave of the Cathedral. A church is after all the house of God, and the term "house" might perhaps with advantage be given a wider connotation than we are apt to bestow upon it. The more we can blend our worship with our common life and cause the temple to be suffused with something of the atmosphere of home, the more deeply shall we realise that in His Holy Church the tabernacle of God is indeed among men.

In concluding which remarks, however, I cannot but recall a cautioning observation made to me by the late Dr. Harry Wotherspoon, in which he stressed the necessity of our constantly remembering that some things at the present time would be fraught with danger, however beneficent they might be in some future generation when, so it is our hope and faith,

piety and devotion will to a greater degree be part of our religious vernacular. The freedom which we possess as regards our ritual is a great privilege, but privilege brings its own responsibility. Presbyterianism has the opportunity of presenting to the world a very high order of worship, since it is at liberty to make its selections from every quarter and possesses the inherent grace of elasticity. But let us in all things walk warily. "He that believeth will not make haste."

ADDRESS AT THE MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR
THE EARL OF BALFOUR, K.G.

St. Giles' Cathedral, 22nd March 1930

[The Memorial Service in St. Giles' was held concurrently with the burial of Lord Balfour at the family home at Whittingehame, East Lothian.]

HALF a century has passed away since the alert and versatile mind of Arthur James Balfour began to exercise its own peculiar influence in our national affairs, and throughout that time men have watched with admiration and respect its expanding powers and intellectual force as they were assiduously applied to the social and political problems of their times. Few men have been so intimately concerned with or loaded by the personal responsibility of the exigencies of so many great and fateful movements and amid such changing and kaleidoscopic scenes. And fewer still have preserved from first to last an adaptability of outlook, a breadth of vision, a capacity to engage with new customs, ventures, and conditions with a mind unclouded by the mists of prejudice or tradition, such as characterised Lord Balfour to the end.

To life he brought not only the noble gifts of a powerful but swift and subtle intellect. He brought also the qualities of courage, faith, and honour, and a chivalry which shed its benison on friend and foe alike. Endowed with every worldly advantage, and predisposed by taste and temperament to pursue the cloistered paths of intellectual culture, he did not therefore isolate him-

self from the dust and struggle of humanity, but descended to the arena of strenuous endeavour to bear with his fellows the burdens of his generation. The lover of science, music, and philosophy became, since he believed it behoved him in duty so to be, the worker on political committees, the parliamentary dialectician, the administrator, the statesman, the toil-weary labourer in the fields of the public interest. Heavy and difficult were the furrows he ploughed throughout his long and arduous working day. And long and arduous indeed it was.

How distant seems the time since first that rising star appeared in the firmament ! Scarce had William of Prussia been proclaimed as German Emperor at Versailles when young Arthur Balfour was entering Paris amid the reek of the fallen Commune. That was sixty years ago. And at Versailles we saw him again when the signing of the Peace Treaty that closed the European War witnessed the German Empire collapse in ruins. Fifty-two years it is since with Beaconsfield and Salisbury he attended the Congress of Berlin to regulate the affairs of the Balkan Peninsula, and from that time onward he stood in the forefront of the battle, urbane but steadfast, amid the rise and fall of political fortune, amid catastrophe and triumph. To him it fell to grapple with the problems of Ireland, of English education, of licensing, of the vexed complexities of imperial economics and the grave urgencies of imperial defence, of party policy and of impartial national statesmanship, of Admiralty and Foreign Office, of Anglo-American understanding and of the national home of Jewry, of the Great War and of the League of Nations.

Yet, onerous and diversified as were his tasks and cares, confused and changing the scenes and circumstances through which he lived, the pressure of his public duties was not allowed to close to him the more tranquil realms of thought and speculation which were

so dear to his soul, and to meditation on those things which are rooted in the Infinite he gave consistently the consecration of his heart and mind.

To-day we look back in retrospect upon his long and varied career, and unanimous testimony from the past harmonises with what we knew of him ourselves. In times of tumult and of controversy, which are now but as echoes on the winds of history, down to the troubles and disorders of our own generation, that serene and graceful figure walked in quietness and confidence, courteous but resolute, gracious but commanding, wise with the wisdom of immense experience, receptive to and vitally concerned with every manifestation of the activities of the human spirit. And, as we have observed, not only in affairs domestic to this nation was felt the power and impact of that penetrating intelligence ; but throughout the wide earth in those great movements of moral adventure on which mankind has courageously embarked, seeking international concord and a nobler interpretation of man's relationship to man, Arthur James Balfour, being dead, yet speaketh.

The secret of his life and inspiration was not hid from men. He held the Christian view of history which, as Dr. Inge has pointed out, is to recognise the greatness of temporal events, yet not as being important in themselves save in so far as they derive their true significance from their relation to an eternal background in which they have both their source and their consummation. Thus he gave of himself, his abilities and powers, as one who steadfastly believed in a meaning and a purpose in the world-process, and that the present was of supreme importance as being bound up with the ultimate things of God. Convinced as he was that he himself and his brethren of the human family were destined for an immortal fellowship with their Creator, the pursuit of justice, beauty, truth, and goodness was for him the supreme objective both of private and corporate life.

In such a conception of the Universe and of man, mere expediencies, self-interest, and the cult of the second-rate could find no place. The nobility of his philosophic outlook, the depth of his religious faith, and the fruits of personal character which came therefrom, formed the basis and immovable foundation on which operated his brilliant talent and aptitude for public affairs.

His earthly life is over, "his work accomplished and the long day done." He has finished his course, he has kept the faith. Elsewhere, and beyond these voices, we believe, as he believed, that that beautiful and benignant personality has entered upon more perfect life where opportunities for service and the exercise of his great capacities will still abound.

As in a theatre, the eyes of men,
After a well-graced actor leaves the stage,
Are idly bent on him that enters next,

so it seems as if to-day a strange profound silence has descended on our common life, an awesome hush in which the voices and the striving of men are for the moment stilled as they stand at the salute to watch that noble and familiar figure go from them into the great Silence, panoplied in the majesty of death. For those who themselves are growing old, and who were in some measure his contemporaries, his passing has left a shining radiance athwart their twilight skies, a tradition of intellectual and spiritual dignity, which they will reverently and affectionately cherish till their own day at last is done. For those who now bear the heat and burden of the day, and whose memories of him are naturally not so intimate nor so many, there yet abides from all he was and all he strove to do an incentive to brave, unselfish living, and an impetus to raise their thoughts and desires to those things unseen and eternal among which his own heart and mind had ascended and continually dwelt.

Of him we may say with Shakespeare, "How noble in reason ! how infinite in faculty ! in form and moving how express and admirable !" But more, we may say of him also with One greater than Shakespeare, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

ADDRESS TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND
ON THE MORAL AND RELIGIOUS
INSTRUCTION OF THE YOUNG

Assembly Hall, Belfast, 6th June 1930

I

RIGHT Reverend Moderator, Fathers, and Brethren : may I on this day when your attention has been occupied with the work of your Church among the young utilise the opportunity which you have so graciously afforded me of addressing your venerable Assembly by making some general observations on the question of the moral and religious instruction of youth ? This is among the most important problems of our age. It constitutes a challenge not only to the Church but also to our educational system, which, in the last resort, must be judged not so much by academic results as by the measure in which it can direct the impressionable mind of adolescence to a reverent attitude towards the universe, with which, as it has been said, every intelligent being must come to terms, and to an enlightened appreciation of the truths of religion and the sanctities of private and corporate life. Our colleges and schools can boast of but poor success if their finished product is turned out into the world largely ignorant of the life and central ideas of Jesus Christ, the lines on which He reasoned, and the principles and values which He emphasised.

There is nothing on which it is the duty of the organised Church more uncompromisingly to insist

than that an education which is purely secular in conception and takes no cognisance of the things of the spirit is truncated and wholly defective in character, if man be regarded as a child of God made for an eternal destiny and the world in which we live as a scene of probation for the training and discipline of immortal souls. A community which professes to hold the Christian interpretation of God, and man, and human life, can hardly without disloyalty to its faith and ideals be expected to support educational policies which do not pay due and serious regard to the moral and religious instruction of the young. God, it is our faith, has made us for Himself. To impress this view of education upon its faithful people is the Church's task and responsibility. "Feed my lambs" is the injunction of its Lord, and to Him it must answer not only for its own obedience to this express command but for its unremitting endeavour to see that all to whom is entrusted by the Christian public the care and guardianship of youth fulfil it also.

The future must largely depend on the measure in which the churchman and the educationist can sympathetically understand each other on this point and work together to give it practical expression. The demand for an increasing emphasis on sound religious education in our day schools is not unreasonable. We live in and partake of the benefits of a Christian civilisation which must guard and preserve its heritage. We ought not to interfere with freedom of conscience. It would be idle to suggest that a man appointed to teach mathematics should be subjected to theological tests. The tests to which he must be submitted are those peculiar to his professed subject. But similarly those who are expected to give religious instruction in a school should also be required to give satisfactory evidence of their qualifications for teaching the truths of the Christian religion and of their personal adherence to the truths they teach. In every school an

equal attention and care ought to be bestowed on securing a sufficiency of those who are competent to be teachers of religion as is expended on the selection of instructors in science, literature, languages, and history.

If we are content to regard religious instruction as something secondary and unimportant, or as a mere concession to traditional prejudice, it can, of course, be well enough undertaken by anyone who can for half an hour occupy the attention of a class with a few stories of ancient Israel or give it a smattering of the missionary journeys of St. Paul. But if it be that Christianity is the power of God unto salvation, if it be that in Jesus Christ, His person, His relationship to God, and the inexhaustible riches of His truth lies the secret of the interpretation of this bewildering world and the complex life of man, the religious instruction of the young demands of those who undertake it especial intellectual and spiritual qualities. Day in and day out the Church must insist on this. We cannot view lightly the crusade against religion on which one great European nation has embarked, and its determination to prevent the access of the young to education in the truths of the Christian faith. Such movements tend to have their influence elsewhere, and for us to be forewarned is to be forearmed.

II

It can hardly be put forward by thoughtful people that religious instruction belongs to a sphere removed from that of secular education. The teaching of the basic facts of Christianity pertains to the province of the secular teacher as well as to that of the cleric. It is difficult to see how anyone can hope to understand adequately the ethical and social development of the last nineteen centuries of Western civilisation, quite apart from its religious development, who is unversed in the mind and message of Him who has been its supreme formative influence, to whom all previous

history moved up, and by whose spirit its subsequent character has been so largely determined. The most significant fact in history has been the fact of Jesus Christ, His consciousness of God, and His attitude to human affairs. The cross on which He died has dominated the ages, and we need not expect to understand humanity or to add any lasting contribution to its welfare unless we make some reasonable effort to form clear and ordered ideas as to what that cross implies. In short, the New Testament is a book with which we have to become familiar before we can take our place as useful citizens.

Jesus Christ is no dead issue. He cannot be ignored. Men have got to think Him out and place Him somewhere in their scheme of things. The fact of Christ means conflict and struggle, not on fields where men slaughter their brethren but in the realms of the mind and soul. It has always been so since He was born in the stable of Bethlehem. He has meant turmoil and dispeace, for all that He was and is constitutes a challenge to the world. One who with calm confidence maintains Himself to be the way, the truth, and the life, and who when they conflict with His ideals lays His fearless hand on venerated customs, traditions, and beliefs, some of them sacrosanct as the law of Moses, is bound to be a storm-centre of controversy and a rock of offence.

In the days of His flesh His gospel fell like a thunderbolt upon contemporary thought. His words, arresting, pregnant with power, cut like a flaming sword to the heart of men's inward lives. They were too intimately related to those deep eternal things which men dimly recognise, but to which they do not always give their loyal allegiance, to remain ignored. By them there was born in the minds of such as heard them an unrest, a dissatisfaction, a mistrust of themselves. Inevitably they aroused embittered opposition, for a man hates nothing more than to have his intellectual

complacency disturbed or to be compelled to look on a higher law than he obeys.

Why should all this have happened when this un-influential young carpenter from northern Galilee began to preach? Why indeed should any have paid attention to Him? It was because His words struck like hammer blows upon the infinite realities and awoke answering and disturbing echoes in men's souls, just as they do to-day. To this hour no thinking man or woman can take up the New Testament and read with careful attention the statements of Christ, without experiencing a strange intellectual and spiritual restlessness. There is in them that which unsettles our placid acceptance of use and wont, which agitates the mind, rouses great questionings, and stirs to clouds of bewildering uncertainty the dust which lies upon the highway of life. Christ came into the world as what a modern writer calls "a great new experience to men." And still to-day throughout the wide earth the minds of all who are concerned with those vast movements of our times, social, religious, and racial, which are destined to determine the future course of history, are concentrated from some angle on the fact of Christ. The conditions of the modern world are such that the Church does not need to apologise for its insistence on the desperate necessity for a sound religious instruction of the young.

III

Life in our generation has become extraordinarily difficult, and many shadows enfold us as we seek to find our way. Amid those shadows two symbols, a church and a school, glow with light and hope. Beyond them one sees the faces of those countless thousands of children, radiant with expectancy as they face the future, whose mind and character it is theirs to mould and educate. As a churchman I realise with gratitude the increasing and earnest attention that is being

bestowed by the teaching profession upon morality and religion. Fundamentally the cause of the Church is the cause of the school, and the cause of the school is the cause of the Church. The same interpretation of human life must be common to them both. We work in the faith that this terrestrial sphere is a school for the training of intelligence and the perfecting of character, since through all the vast processes of creation God is making for Himself a world of immortal spirits who shall at last be fitted to enjoy eternal and unclouded fellowship with Him. We will have better educational results and fewer domestic tragedies the more we learn that the young are growing souls as well as bodies, that the vagaries and perturbations of the adolescent boy and girl have spiritual as well as physical causes, and that the expanding mind and soul of youth require a more delicate and scientific treatment than they often receive. To the school-master and the clergyman alike an understanding of the spirit of man as evidenced in individual and historical development is as essential as the mastering of academic knowledge.

To what end does Christianity assert that education should be directed? Well, if we impress upon the young anything other than that this life is a sphere for work and service, a trust lent them by God whereby they shall seek the good and welfare of this world and for the use or abuse of which they must at last render an account—if we teach them other than that, we are virtually saying, "This world is neither moral nor purposeful. It is a chance isolation amid a disordered and meaningless universe emerging from nothing and progressing to extinction. Therefore pile up for yourselves treasures on earth. Eat and drink, for to-morrow you die." If we convey to the young setting out on life's journey that it is up to them to make the most of their education and of their fleeting years in order that they may be the better equipped to grab what they can

of the world's goods from their struggling competitors because the night cometh when no man can work ; if we impress upon them the necessity of assiduity in study and the employment of their faculties and talents, as being their stock-in-trade, only that they may expand in possessions, ease, and personal comfort ; if they be taught to keep their eyes open and to preserve a character of rectitude simply because from long experience honesty has been proved to be the best policy—what is all that but unadulterated atheism ? It is the flat and contemptuous denial of the Christian doctrine of man's social responsibility. It is the negation of any faith in man's earthly life as being related to another and higher state of being for which here and now he is called to prepare himself.

But if in this present experience of ours God is to be taken into account, must not education be directed towards impressing on the young mind that ambition, striving, and profits must inevitably be regarded from the point of view of trusteeship and of service ? The ideal of love must animate the use and cultivation of talents, opportunities, endowments, gifts. We cannot live to ourselves alone, but as those who recognise that we have responsibilities towards society involved both in what we are and what we have. There is essential Christianity in Mr. George Bernard Shaw's definition of a gentleman as being one who puts more into life than he takes out of it.

What is permanent and what is transitory ? What is worth seeking and what is not ? What things dare we call ends in themselves and what are at best but means to an end ? What in this world of change and decay can we truly call our own as being of a nature that will be inseparable from us in this or in any world hereafter ? These are questions which pastor and teacher must put to youth and guide it to an answer. Love never faileth. So said St. Paul, who had good cause to lay to heart the fickleness and unreliability of much on which men

are apt to place their trust. Covet earnestly the best gifts, he urges us, but adds that there is a more excellent way. For though the world passeth away and the lust thereof, yet faith, hope, and love are abiding, and the greatest of these is love.

IV

We need not expect our task to be easy or our burden to be light. Nevertheless, *sed nulla, nisi ardua, virtus*. There has fallen over the Christian world the shadow of a grave ignorance of the mind and will of its Master which renders it increasingly hard to apply Him as a healing for its woes. It is therefore not to be wondered at that our social life is becoming very disordered, that what is implied by Christianity in the vexed problems of commerce and industry is quite nebulous and undefined, that suspicion and mistrust characterise the dealings of men and nations with each other. Moreover, there is in many quarters an open and unashamed rebellion, championed by much popular literature, not only against the doctrines but against the moral ideals of Christianity, which are held up to cynical scorn.

On the other hand, we must not forget that there is manifest a widespread world-weariness. There is a sense of shame and of longing in the world's soul, a dissatisfaction with things as they are, a wistful groping, and a disposition to reinvestigate Jesus Christ evidenced often where we would least expect to find it. In the deepened social conscience of our day we may see the working of the Holy Spirit. We look to our schools to send forth into the world men and women broad in outlook, tolerant in attitude, cultured in mind, and sympathetic of heart, who will recognise with hopefulness that the political issue before our country rests to-day upon the active working of the social conscience. In our political arena the struggle is now between two opposite but genuinely loyal and sincere economic

theories which are each bent upon solving on the highest basis of common justice the problem of how humanity can best live together.

We must be neither irreflective optimists nor pessimists. It is our duty to face the stubborn facts of our generation and to resist the temptations of a foolish complacency suggested by that fatal belief in inevitable and mechanical progress which was the intellectual curse of the nineteenth century. The events which our own age has been called to witness should have given it the *coup de grâce*. There is no free road of automatic moral or spiritual evolution. It is, as Dr. Inge has pointed out, a false creed to which history, science, experience, and Christianity give the lie. The records of mankind warn us in unambiguous terms of the catastrophes that follow upon apostasy from God, and, as was observed long ago, it seems more difficult to maintain our advantages than to win them. Progress is achieved only by determined moral choice and effort, selfless resolve, and consecration of spiritual purpose.

To direct the world to this straight and narrow way is the task of the Church and the school alike, and on the result of our efforts with the young depends the future of civilisation. "What is man," it has been asked, "without a pure and enlightened education?" And the answer is: "A splendid slave! a reasoning savage! vacillating between the dignity of an intelligence derived from God and the degradations of passions participated with brutes, and in the accident of their alternate ascendancy, shuddering at the terrors of a hereafter, or hugging the horrid hope of annihilation."

V

We are linking up the peoples of the earth in a League of Nations. This is the one splendid and constructive ideal which emerged from the wreckage of the World War. But we can place no real reliance on its effective opera-

tion unless our democracies can be tamed and pacified by the spirit of Christ. The advances of scientific research and discovery are deepening and enriching our stores of knowledge. More and more is man securing the domination of the natural universe and harnessing its forces to serve his will. But of what avail is such expanding power if we ourselves, the lords of creation who wield it, are spiritually uncontrolled and liable to direct its vast potentialities to sinister and destructive ends? "What sort of messages will they send with it?" asked Ruskin when told that the laying of the first Atlantic cable was an accomplished fact.

Our activities in the direction of social amelioration can do much towards bringing society into some semblance of approximation to the Christ mind, and we have cause for thankfulness in the quickened social conscience of our times. But you must have not only a moral but a spiritual passion to inspire this purpose and to fill the hungry soul as well as clothe the naked body. So also in the educational sphere. Unless our policy of wider education is to be the sheer damnation of society, we must somehow secure that its direction is towards spiritual and not wholly utilitarian ends. No one surely outside a lunatic asylum would assert that a population of first-class honours graduates would as a natural sequence bring in the dawn of the millennium.

I know that plain and commonplace people are somewhat wearisome to our intellectuals, but it is the clever folk of whom I am genuinely afraid and not the ordinary or even the stupid. The brilliantly-equipped intelligence, satisfied with intellectual attainment in itself, is consistently a menace to the Kingdom of God. The most devastating catastrophes which have convulsed the world and deluged it in suffering and bloodshed have been engineered not by blockheads but by unusually gifted adventurers whose minds have been divorced from the standards of Christ. These have formed the scourges of the human race and given

emphasis to Dryden's sneer that by education most have been misled.

Men are destined to find the light only through an education that will make them aware that the salvation of mankind depends upon the harmonising of human activities with the will of God as revealed in Jesus Christ, an education that will lead them in humility to His feet saying, "Lord, teach us of thy ways, and tell us of the glory of thy Kingdom." We depend for our security on something higher than well-equipped brains, advanced conditions of material comfort, or economic prosperity. These cannot still the restless spirit, curb its greed and avarice, soothe its fears, or limit the lawless ambitions and desires of men and nations.

VI

It is perhaps not unnatural that from the aftermath of the Great War has been born a somewhat sceptical and unsettled atmosphere. This has created a condition of social strain which has penetrated the homes of the people. We are inclined to drift and let things take their own course, for everything seems fluid and unanchored. Most people, I find, are worried as to how they should bring up their children amid so many new conditions. Domestic life has lost not a few of its old sanctions, and the home is somewhat loosely held together. The older people are vague and uneasy as regards the proper and advisable limits of parental discipline, religion, and churchgoing, and what is morally healthy for the young and what is not. As to what the emancipation of youth should mean and what it should not mean they are by no means clear. Looking back on their own upbringing in other days and other circumstances, they feel it was perhaps too strict and circumscribed ; yet as regards the upbringing of their own children they are distinctly uneasy lest it may be far too much the reverse. It is not surprising that in

many instances the youngsters decide for themselves, and, taking the law into their own hands, regard the possession of a latchkey as the symbol of human liberty.

Respect and reverence at school and at home are definitely linked up with religion, which is based on reverence towards the fatherhood of God. The decay of good manners is also a serious symptom of our times. These must begin at home and be fostered in the school if they are to exist at all. One is frequently amazed at the fashion in which parents nowadays allow themselves to be addressed by their children. No doubt the intention is to create a bond of sympathy, but the permission of undue familiarity and lightly-veiled rudeness is a poor method which reflects no great credit upon the character of the elders and is certainly not calculated to improve the character of the young. The frank and easy camaraderie which now exists between the youth of both sexes is a most admirable and healthy thing ; but it has its limits, and should not overflow them to embrace those to whom a deeper respect is due. Modern slang, too, sometimes apt and clever, but frequently silly, vulgar, and quite unintelligible, ought to be watched. It is degrading our noble language, than which the world has produced no more rich and musical a vehicle of expression, and is thereby lessening our capacity to appreciate what is dignified and beautiful.

Our gracious King, in a famous message to his people, said some years ago that our greatness in its highest sense depended upon the character of the homes of the people of these islands. And how true it is ! Instances, of course, can be quoted in plenty of the son or daughter of a godly home bartering his or her birthright and going to the devil. But who but a fool would maintain that a nation whose every household made an altar of its family hearth and outwardly testified to the sacredness of home and domestic relationships would not be stronger, nobler, and happier than a nation in whose

homes the subject of religion as the supreme family tie is hardly mentioned and such a thing as an act of united family recognition of God is unknown? Reticence in talking of religious matters may be regarded as good form, but it is thoroughly bad Christianity. The early Christians, whose passionate faith carried the Gospel throughout the Mediterranean and laid the foundations of the Catholic Church, did not hesitate to speak of the things which concern the soul!

And may I say in passing that the disappearance of that family recognition of God whereby its members were wont to stand for a moment in reverence before the great Father in heaven as each meal was prefaced by words of thanks to Him as the Giver of all mercies, is a loss more serious than perhaps we realise. It is by the consecration of these homes of ours to the love and obedience of God that the nation with all its varied activities will come to evidence that same spirit towards Him who is the Lord of nations and of men.

VII

As things appear to be in the home, we must nowadays almost entirely depend upon the Sunday and day schools for that religious instruction of the young which ought to be the primary function of the Christian parent. (How many parents, after their children have left school, know or try to find out whether the youngsters still say their prayers and read their Bibles, or lovingly seek to give them any religious guidance?) It is of vital importance, as I observed earlier, that not only the Church but our whole educational system should concentrate on this task. There is nothing more disconcerting, and giving rise to more serious reflection, than the prevalent lack of knowledge of the elementary facts of Christianity. The Bible would appear to be largely unread, and in a fairly wide experience I have been frequently appalled at the

ignorance of young people regarding its essential contents. It is the exception and not the rule to find an adolescent who has any enlightened grasp of the Christian story and its implications, or who could give you any coherent statement of what Christianity means or stands for. This surely is a matter for our earnest consideration.

One of the most heartening features of modern Church life is the recognition of the fact that the Bible class and Sunday school are agencies which demand for their furtherance and support the application of the best intelligence and organising ability of which the Church is capable. It was not always thus, but things have greatly changed for the better in recent years. We are all alive now to the urgent necessity of developing, strengthening, and co-ordinating this work along the most enlightened and up-to-date lines, and the activities of the Church in this direction are becoming more strenuous and efficient every year. The Sunday-school teacher, however, more than the scholar, emerges as the chief problem. These cannot be obtained in sufficient numbers, and many young men and women who might be expected to love God enough to give such service to the Lord Jesus Christ are too busy on Sunday afternoons going out to tea-parties, rushing about in motor cars, or playing games ; but even were the supply adequate there remains the vital test of quality.

We ought to impress upon our teachers more than we do the responsibilities and difficulties of their task, and that those who are privileged to impart religious knowledge must themselves also first be earnest students and enquirers concerning what they teach. The instruction of the young in the truths of our holy religion is not a thing to be entered on lightly. It is a big and splendid undertaking, which requires people of big and splendid character for its exercise, and which asks of them that they shall endeavour to equip both their minds and their hearts for its due and proper discharge. Ministers

should remember that one of the most important of their duties is to see that their Sunday-school teachers are themselves systematically trained. To the minister is committed the care of the souls of his people, and he has no right to entrust the religious instruction of the children of his flock to such as are not themselves being instructed and over whom he is not exercising constant and brotherly oversight. It is unfair to the children and unfair to the teachers, most of whom are only too anxious for help and guidance.

If this would appear to be adding further to the burdens of men many of whom are already seriously overworked, let me say that such a responsibility as this, together with the cultivation of his own mind and soul by prayer and study, the careful and consecrated preparation of his sermons, the supervision of his congregational organisations and activities, the care of the sick, the troubled, and the afflicted among his people, and, not least, the securing for himself of a sufficiency of leisure whereby he may keep himself humanised by some recreation and the sweet intimacy of his own friends, are the minister's first and supreme concern ; and I am sure that the best people in any congregation quite realise that it is only what time remains after these have been faithfully attended to that can be expended upon what is known as ordinary pastoral visitation. The Church is suffering terribly from the driven parson, who, becoming little more than an automatic machine that runs at top speed for fifteen hours out of the twenty-four, himself soon ceases to know the peace of God.

What are the main things to be stressed in the education of youth in religious knowledge ? There should certainly be an intensive training in the memorising and understanding of those historic facts and episodes which both in the Old Testament and in the New underlie the Christian faith. These, however, and especially in the case of the Old Testament, should be

selected with scrupulous care and taught in the light of the best modern scholarship. What in the Old Testament is but derived from ¹ the legendary religious folklore of primitive peoples should be taught as such, and not as historic facts linked up in some unreal way with the subsequent incarnation of God in Jesus Christ. It is, for instance, but folly, in the light of all we know, to teach the young that in the early chapters of Genesis they will find presented to them a detailed, scientific, and historically accurate account of the origin of man, this world, and the universe, when on examination of these chapters they will immediately find that they contain not one but two and differing accounts. Moreover, it is grievously wrong to encourage the young mind to identify such confusion with the sacred voice of the Holy Spirit.

The Bible should be taught not so much as a book but as a library whose volumes are not all of equal moral and spiritual value, but which together afford the sure and certain unity of evidence to God's great and progressive revelation of Himself which culminated in Jesus Christ our Saviour, and which are indeed for us the Word of God wherein man finds the supreme rule of faith and life and the way of salvation. Time is often wasted and the intelligence of the young insulted by obscurantist dissertation upon things which have no direct bearing whatever upon a true appreciation of the spirit of Christianity. The drift away from the Church on the part of the adolescent has many causes, but one of these undoubtedly is that unless instructed from the pulpit on progressive and enlightened lines the young either consider the minister to be reactionary and

¹ The words " derived from " were not in the address as it was spoken. They are here inserted in order to make my meaning clearer, as exception was taken in some quarters in Ireland to this sentence in its original form. What, for example, in the earlier chapters of the Book of Genesis has its origin in even more primitive sources has nevertheless certainly been rebaptised by Christianity, and thus through its allegorical teaching embodies Christianity's divine and eternal truths.

ignorant or suspect him to be insincere. Youth in the matter of religion is determined to find reality.

The main emphasis should be upon the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, His relationship to and His revelation of the nature and character of God, the splendour of His vision, His place in history, His standards and values, His specific contribution to human thought, the fact of the Universal Church, its sacramental faith, and its mission to the world, the vast personal and social implications of Christ's Gospel, His sovereignty as the risen Lord of all life, eternally present with His people, and the reality of the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Religious education is a problem that goes deep. Morality, let us not forget, is directly derivative from and is conditioned by our conception of God. Those who glibly say that one religion is as good as another show themselves to have little or no understanding of one religion or another. The Hindu, the Mohammedan, and the Christian may equally say, "I believe in one God." But while with their lips they make the same sound, they mean entirely different things. This difference is clearly evidenced by the divergence in their moral values. The ethical standards of Christianity in our midst will continue to endure just so long as the Christian idea concerning the mind and character of God is understood, appreciated, and believed. With that it ultimately stands or falls. The brotherhood of man and his duties towards his neighbours, which of course involve all our social and sex relationships, are, together with his human dignity and his eternal destiny, inextricably bound up with the Christian conception of the Fatherhood of God as revealed in Jesus Christ,

In which the burthen and the mystery,
In which the heavy and the weary weight
Of all this unintelligible world,
Is lightened.

The world has got off the rails these days, and men are acutely conscious of it. They are seeking for a way of life, and many eyes are turned wistfully to Galilee. In spite of so many things in our modern practice and experience which are not what we would wish them to be, we need not be despondent ; for the true interpretation of the travail of our times may be that we are standing in the dawn of a new religious reformation. Personally, I often think that we are, though what the outcome will be we cannot even dimly foretell. But it is of critical importance that in this period of religious disturbance the young should be prepared both by the home and by the school, no less than by the Church, to face its crowded problems with an adequately equipped intelligence.

VIII

If we take a reasonable view of history, we surely cannot but believe that Greece and Rome as well as Israel were with all their intellectual and practical achievement destined in the purposes of God to be contributing factors in the presentation to mankind of His revelation of Himself in Christ. Let us not forget our debt. Therefore I do not think it irrelevant in this connection to touch upon the question of the classics. I often wonder whether there be something more than mere coincidence in the fact that amid our very ordered and stable British life an irreflective mentality which seeks to demolish existing society by drastic revolutionary methods has attained considerable prominence in an era in which the classical side of education has fallen into disrepute ? There is nothing which so teaches the value of tradition, the close and definite interdependence of the ages, the intricately woven and delicate nature of the fabric of society, and a sense of personal kinship with the past, as an early introduction to the literature, history, and thought of the cultured

civilisations of antiquity. Obliterate this, and you tend to rear a generation with no sense of the continuity of society's growth, with a thoroughgoing contempt for all that is hallowed by custom or long-established veneration and with no appreciation whatever of the fact that each generation is bound up with its predecessors. Education is more than a means to enable a man to earn his living. Its first responsibility is to make the pupil, in the famous phrase of Terence, "a man." It is a process for the development of our full personality in order that we may take our place as worthy members of society. And nothing which aids this development can be extraneous to the cause of Him who came that men might have life and have it more abundantly.

I think, however, the tide is now on the turn. The classics seem to be coming into their own again. On the part of parents there is being evidenced in this matter a greater common-sense and foresight which should be fostered and encouraged by the Church. But we will never get the classics restored to their proper place and influence in scholastic life until we can rid the minds of adult people of the vulgar and unchristian heresy that nothing matters in the education of the young save what can afterwards be turned into realisable commercial assets. If a boy or girl be taught at school the elements of Latin and Greek—and I do not much care how little they may learn—they have been taught at an impressionable age, and they will never afterwards quite forget, that there is such a thing as an historic past, that there is a stream of general European culture in which they have their part, and that it is a noble thing to realise one's fellowship with the ages. In other words, there have been laid in them the foundations of a cultured intelligence.

Morality and religion alike depend for their growth upon a proper sense of values. To this end we must teach the young to discriminate what are the things in life worth possessing, more precious than gold, more

enduring than bronze. And there is nothing which cultivates the mind of youth more than an early acquaintanceship with that culture of antiquity which still lives and permeates our higher thought, and which, in a modern but very real sense, creates that idea of universal citizenship which Socrates held, and of which the twentieth century is in sore need, "not of Athens, nor of Greece, but of the whole world."

IX

In concluding which observations, may I say that we ministers of the Gospel must so order our own minds that men will take knowledge of us that we ourselves have companied with Christ and learned the secret of the "world beautiful." Our primary duty is to take an uncompromising stand on the righteousness of God. In word and deed and thought we must declare ourselves the champions of those eternal principles which for nations as well as for individuals involve the pursuit of beauty, truth, and goodness, and the practice of justice, brotherhood, and mercy, and on which alone can society build up a stable and lasting life. We must rouse ourselves from selfish timidity and indolence, and fearlessly close with the problems of our day. We must have no truck or traffic with flippancy, cynicism, callous indifference to the sufferings of mankind, or irreverence towards life's intimate and sacred things. Also we must resist the temptation to become narrowly ecclesiastical in our outlook, and preserve and cultivate a sympathetic and intelligent interest in all human affairs.

The ministers of Christ ought to be characterised not only by their earnestness and sympathy, but by their buoyancy of spirit and infectious gaiety and confidence of heart. With courage, faith, and fortitude we must combine patience, kindness, and long-suffering. It is a wise thing to expect much from people, as you cannot associate with the young without knowing very well.

The more young persons know is expected of them in their character by those they respect and trust, the more they will try to evidence. It is the function of education to exalt the ideal of human nature, which is more Christ-like than to palliate and play down to its weakness. The latter was certainly not the method of our Lord. He expected more from men than many of us consider reasonable. "Be ye perfect," He said, and He said it to average people like ourselves.

The Kingdom of God, so Christ insisted, is a condition of society which is realisable. But we will do well to remember that the slowness of men's response to His appeal and their failure to emulate His practical idealism did not weaken His faith in the potentialities of human nature. He taught His disciples, and they blundered and fell away. So He taught them again. And when still they blundered and proved disappointing pupils, He taught them again and again. The Pharisees, said Augustine, should have known who Christ was by His patience.

The high and holy calling which is ours is one which surely demands all the patience, faith, and courage of which our nature can be capable, though our lives are comparatively sheltered from some of the storms which beat on other mortals and drive many of them to shipwreck, especially those who are in the dawn of life. Let us always remember that we are among men not to judge or to condemn, but to love, and give, and help, and save. Our work, with all its difficulties, must be, and surely is, its own reward. For though often dispiriting, our labour we cannot but know is not in vain. The seed which we sow groweth in secret; and though we will not see the harvest, others will abundantly reap where we have sown. And after all, does it matter much who gathers in the sheaves, so long as we ourselves have been faithful in the sowing?

SERMON PREACHED ON THE GENERAL
ASSEMBLY SUNDAY OF THE PRESBY-
TERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND

Assembly Hall, Belfast, Whitsunday, 8th June 1930

Thus saith the Lord God : Come from the four winds, O breath,
and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.—*Ezekiel xxxvii. 9.*

I

THIS striking passage was spoken by the prophet Ezekiel during the captivity in Babylon. Ten thousand of the people of Jerusalem, including the best of its intelligentsia, had been carried off as prisoners by Nebuchadnezzar. Despite this crushing disaster many had remained true to their faith that Jehovah would not and could not forsake His chosen race, and that eventually they must inevitably return in triumph to Jerusalem. But the tragic news which reached them at length that their holy temple in far-off Jerusalem, and the city itself, had been reduced to a heap of dust and ashes, plunged the vast majority of the exiles into unrelieved despair. There came a sudden spiritual reaction. God had deserted them and played them false ! The majority in sullen resentment deliberately renounced their religion and embraced the heathen faith of their Babylonian conquerors. Only a fragment remained loyal to the worship of their fathers, confident still that somehow this apparent death of all their national dreams and ambitions would ultimately work out for them a new and richer life.

It was to the deserting majority that Ezekiel preached his dramatic sermon on the valley of the dry bones. In this the darkest hour of their national history, when

the Jewish state seemed to have perished from off the face of the earth, he held before their eyes the vision of resurrection. He strove to justify God's mysterious dealings with His people and to keep aglow the lamp of faith which was flickering to extinction under the fierce tempests of catastrophe and defeat. The distresses of the body politic, however, tended to the revival of personal faith among individuals. When the glories of national power and pageantry passed away, men turned from their blind trust in those visible things which had proved so insubstantial, and sought the consolation and help of personal religion. In the hour when spear and shield and crown were cast down in faintness, when political structures proved wholly unreliable and the strength of man was turned to weakness, men sought for the Kingdom of God not in the pomp or majesty of earthly dominion but in the secret places of their own hearts and minds and in those verities which are anchored on things permanent and eternal.

II

This is a suitable theme for our contemplation this Whitsunday. This is the birthday of the Christian Church. It is the anniversary of the time when the waiting company of those faithful to the conviction that Christ had risen from the dead was at Jerusalem, on Pentecost, first quickened into life and abounding activity by the inrush of the power of the Holy Spirit. The imagery of the rushing mighty wind and the cloven tongues of fire is strikingly symbolic. But these things, whatever they were and however manifested, did not constitute the real experience of those who were present on that portentous occasion. They are, however, at the least majestic symbols, a powerful and suggestive representation of the Spirit of God who then descended upon them.

The Holy Spirit is the direct gift of Jesus Christ, "of all His gifts the sum and crown." He gave it to be

the life and inspiration of His Church, the guide of humanity, and that power which in all, through all, and above all has made and is making for righteousness. He gave it to be the driving force which is slowly but steadily propelling the ark of Christendom, through seas which are sometimes calm but more frequently are tempestuous, towards its ultimate haven which lies in the realisation of the Kingdom of God.

Now, there is, as preachers are fond of emphasising, a close analogy between the exiles in Babylon and the Church militant upon the earth. The Church of God in this world has been described as a company of exiles waiting for the coming of the day of Christ. It is committed to truths and ideals against which the secular mind is set in uncompromising opposition. Those who would be its loyal members need never expect the Christian warfare to be easy, and certainly it knows no discharge. The followers of Christ must be neither loafers nor lukewarm adherents. For such He has no use. His call is for spiritual heroes who have the faith and courage to endure unto the end. He leads them forth not to green pastures and sheltered valleys, but to the mountain paths of high adventure. Their armour is that faith which is the evidence of things not seen, and their objective is an eternal city which they believe to have foundations. They stake their all upon its reality, and are convinced that this earth is but a veil, while the real glory lies beyond and is yet to be revealed.

The Christian is persuaded beyond all doubt that ultimate victory lies not with the selfish braggart and the successful swashbuckler, but with the good, the merciful, and the pure in heart. He orders his life on the assumption that in spite of everything that seems to deny the wisdom and the love of God, Jesus Christ is true and reliable, and he is prepared to pay the price of such a belief in the sacrifice of all in his own life that is at variance with Christ's mind and character.

Age after age this glorious little army has waged its

battle in the world. The line has often swayed and not infrequently been broken. Defeat and disaster have fallen upon it, and because of them, as was the case with the exiles in Babylon, the love of many has grown cold. But far worse and more insidious than the open and avowed foes who have blocked its path has been the ever-present treason within its own camp. And there is still treason within it. There is a Christian soldier asleep at his post wherever we find a member of the Church who forgets that, since it is the Body of Christ, it is holy, and that, since all are the children of a common Father and therefore brethren one of another, it is catholic.

Should we not more frequently pause and endeavour to realise just what we are saying and what our confession really implies when we repeat these words, which perhaps lose some of their significance owing to their very familiarity: "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church"? Not all of us, I fear, can do this, or our regard for our duties towards it would be more marked than is always the case. Serious reflection upon this matter might enable us to understand more clearly than we do that, if we really believe it to be an essential part of God's great purpose of redemption, to treat this Church of Jesus Christ in a flippant fashion, to scorn its ordinances and means of grace, to patronise it, to take advantage of its ministrations only when it suits ourselves and to ignore them when our own convenience dictates—in other words, to be other than profoundly reverent towards it, to regard it as less than holy and less than catholic, and to repudiate it by act, indifference, or impiety—is to be disloyal to the Church's head who is Jesus Christ our Lord. And if some should think this statement too strong, let us for a few minutes consider what is the nature of the Church as expressed in the beliefs of the faith to which we have pledged our allegiance, and that branch of it in which God through our baptism has joined us unto Christ.

III

Our Lord when He was upon the earth proclaimed the Kingdom of God as the motif of His good news to mankind. The Kingdom was an ideal of individual and social life which involved a complete and drastic revolution in human thought. Never man spake as this man. It struck at the roots of material values, superseded racial distinctions and geographical frontiers, and even invalidated the generally accepted ideas of religion, Hebrew as well as Gentile, by disallowing the effectuality of temple, priesthood, altar, or ritual, save only when they expressed the worship of God in terms of purest spiritual reality. It necessitated a readjustment of all human valuation in which the standard of priority became qualitative and not quantitative, and demanded an entirely new attitude of mind towards the facts of life and death and a rethinking from start to finish of all that was denoted by the words "God" and "man." Even the law of Moses was not inviolate, but was tested by a new ideal. "Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time . . . But I say unto you."

Yet this gospel of the Kingdom was not destructive. It was definitely constructive, merging in the blazing splendour of its noon the lights of truth which shone from every sincere and honest adventure of the human mind. The words which Christ spoke were spirit and life, and religion was revealed as the personal attitude of a human soul to God. That our Lord came not to destroy but to fulfil, the culture of Greece, the theocratic vision of the Hebrew, and the proud imperialism of Rome were soon to discover when they brought their rich achievements to His feet. Though the Kingdom was an ideal of perfection, Christ never ceased to emphasise that it was an attainable ideal ; and to that belief His followers in all ages have been committed. "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." His confidence in the infinite possibilities of

human nature, and the demands which He made upon the moral and spiritual capacities of men, were among the features of His preaching which most staggered His contemporaries and infused with new hope the outcasts of the earth. "Be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect." And this in sober earnestness He said not to saints, but to publicans and sinners.

He was never hampered by false values, for He always knew exactly where He was. His penetrating insight pierced through hypocrisy and self-deception like a rapier and struck home to the heart of reality, revealing the souls of men naked before their own eyes. The greatness of His moral courage, His loyalty to truth and certainty of God, His consistency in practising those precepts of love and sacrifice which He preached, His stern righteousness but infinite pity—these things led Him to the Cross. But they made manifest to men what were the things in human life that mattered, and what were the things that mattered not at all. They aroused in the heart of humanity a new thirst for the divine which only He could adequately quench, and a hunger after God which only He could satisfy. If from the august and awful majesty of His holiness all that was false and unclean recoiled in fear, so to the comfort and welcome of His love and mercy the burdened and the lost drew near to lay their sins and sorrows down.

His gospel of the Kingdom and the Fatherhood of God demanded the brotherhood of man, insisted that the human race was not a disintegrated mass of conflicting sections, but was an organic whole, a mutually interested society, in which each individual owed responsibility to the fellowship and was divinely commissioned to be his brother's keeper. Man was a social being created for service, and life's true greatness lay in ministering and not in being ministered unto. For the propagation of His ideal He created His Church. It was to be a holy society, in the world but not of it, which itself should form on earth the nucleus of the

Kingdom, the visible expression of the household of God, its members committed to His interpretation of human life as a sphere of love and service, and whose supreme function was the proclamation of Himself and of His message unto all nations. He charged it to manifest to the world in its corporate life that unity in which the children of the heavenly Father should dwell, so that the world might believe in the Son whom the Father had sent. And He declared that the distinctive mark whereby the world should know His disciples would be neither credal nor denominational, but would simply be the love which they bore one to another. Many of us will find cause for considerable heart-searching as we remember that our congregational life ought to be the visible expression of the family and household of God.

Ere the days of Christ's flesh were accomplished the framework of His Church was complete. The holy ministry, definitely bestowed but quite undefined as to type and unrestricted as to its future development, was instituted and ordained in the persons of the apostles, to whom were entrusted the functions of their sacred office. They were God's servants, commissioned to be the ministers of His Word and Sacraments, but in no sense to stand between Him and His people. From them this ministry was transmitted to others, and so in the golden chain of regular ordination has come down to this our own day. The congregation of the faithful existed in the flock who followed Him ; the faith was delivered unto them in the revelation of the Father through the Son ; the sacraments were bestowed as the means of grace and the consolidating ritual acts of the society, and in the Holy Communion the Christian finds the promise of his Lord fulfilled—" Lo, I am with you alway." Christ died, and was buried ; and the third day He rose again, death having no dominion over Him, in all that we know as constituting human personality. In the power of His risen life He furnished

the Church with its charter and commission to go into all the world and preach the gospel to all peoples, baptizing them in the name of the Triune God. On the first Pentecost at Jerusalem there was breathed into the waiting frame the galvanising life of the Holy Spirit. The Church was born. Thereafter it faced its destiny as a living organism, a direct creation of God, the mystical body of Christ, the extension of His incarnation.

IV

The Church, then, as Presbyterianism has stoutly maintained, and as stoutly as ever did Canterbury or Rome, is not a human institution. It was not created by mere mortal agency. It does not exist through the volition of human groups or societies of persons who, accepting the Gospel in its ethical and spiritual implications, profess themselves to be followers of the teaching and personal example of Jesus, and desire for the better ordering of human life to organise themselves together in His name. It cannot be regarded as a mutually-associated corporation or some coalescence of harmonious opinion which assents to the truth of the Gospel as embodying the principles of eternal life. Much less is it a fire-insurance society, as someone cynically observed, though many would appear to view it as such. It is a specific divine creation, "coming down from God out of heaven," and itself an integral part of the gospel of Christ and of God's redemptive purpose for the human race. Man did not make it, nor can man of his own will disband it.

The Church is sent by God into the world to bring the world unto Himself. Its members are united to the risen Lord, and because united with Him are united with one another. They are one in Christ Jesus, and there is no longer Jew nor Greek, bond nor free. As God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, so in the Christian society, the extension of Christ's in-

carnation, there exists the divinely constituted agency which seeks to assimilate the world to itself and thereby to absorb the life and activities of mankind into the life of the Kingdom of God wherein at last shall be experienced His promised peace, since nation shall no longer lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. "The foundation of the Church," as a distinguished Scottish divine has said, "rests not upon the will or consent or beliefs of men, whether as individuals or societies, but upon the creative will of God."¹

Now, if we accept this doctrine we cannot regard the Church, of which we are members through our baptism, as a mere self-associated body of well-disposed people who have banded themselves together for moral and religious ends. We must be aware that the allegiance which it demands of us is of a different sort from that which one gives to some philanthropic institution to which one has sent a subscription. The Church is God's own creation, specifically founded on the earth to bring in His Kingdom among men, and we its members are bound to it by the most sacred and solemn vows of loyalty and personal allegiance, taken at the font, taken at the holy table, taken each time we pray "Thy Kingdom come," taken on each occasion that we make the assertion, "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church." How, then, in the light of all this ought we to regard our religious duties?

This is a question which Christian people must seriously and honestly face, for we live in anxious and critical times.

Not long ago, a great Anglican scholar, inquiring into what is the minimum that religion demands, said that it demanded a meaning and a purpose in the world-process. It would seem a reasonable demand

¹ One of the best statements in modern theological literature of the doctrine of the Church according to the orthodox presbyterian standards is to be found in the book from which this quotation is taken—*A Manual of Church Doctrine*, by H. J. Wotherspoon and J. M. Kirkpatrick (Hodder & Stoughton).

enough, but one would be bold to say that it was accorded any general recognition in these days when, baffled by the troubles and perplexities of our generation, so many are loosening their grip on a reasonable faith in the providential government of the universe, with results which are evident in the deteriorating moral standards of the people. Unless we are prepared to maintain unswervingly that certain standards of conduct and morality are absolute, and unless we act as if the evolution of life has a definitely moral and spiritual end, we reduce human existence to a chaos.

There is much in our modern life which is courageous, strong, and splendid, but much also which is unsound and radically unwholesome, and nothing is more pernicious than that so many have ceased to take life seriously. Yet life in the aftermath of the great world conflict has become very serious indeed. The rigorous scrupulousness of behaviour which characterised an earlier generation has been supplanted by a Laodicean tolerance which grapples with nothing and finds it easier and less inconvenient to put up with anything. Men smile to-day on much on which their fathers would have frowned ; and though we flatter ourselves that this is due to the broadening of our minds, we are left with an uneasy suspicion that it may have more to do with the weakening of our characters. Tolerance may be a vice as easily as a virtue, and can only be a virtue when based securely on moral principles. If we look around us with dispassionate eyes, there are in evidence not infrequent signs that our present-day tolerance, so far from making life sweeter, is souring it with the subtle poison of sheer moral and spiritual indifferentism. It is difficult now to shock anyone, and it seems to be a boast of worldly wisdom with many young people that they are never shocked at anything. This irreflective and non-ethical attitude to life, masquerading under the name of tolerance, is eating like a cancer into the character of the nation. It is in evidence everywhere, from the

lowering of the standards of those mutual moral obligations which hold society together, and the weakening of the domestic sanctities, down to the degradation of the public artistic taste, and that superior contempt for all religious emotion as an amiable weakness or a played-out superstition.

A profound change in recent years has affected the common mentality of the people. It is not only that there appears to be widespread dissatisfaction with our traditional statement of the Christian faith, that the orthodox expression of doctrinal truth seems to be quite unpalatable to the masses, but the very morality embodied in the historic code of Christian ethics is in many quarters repudiated and held up to scorn and contempt. The modern novelist, whatever he may stand for, can hardly be claimed—save for some notable exceptions—as a protagonist of Christian morality. Only folly can ignore the fact that multitudes of our people are completely alienated from any form of organised religion, and have no conscious connection whatever with the life and worship of the Church. This is not a phenomenon particular to any one class of the community. There is going on around us a conscious or unconscious revolt against the Church and the moral and spiritual implications of the Gospel.

Moreover, permeating as a spiritual poison the whole body of the people, there is an ignorance of Christian truth which recently the Bishop of Liverpool rightly described as appalling, and which, in an age when it is sorely needed, renders it almost impossible to secure in social or national affairs a practical application of the mind of Christ. It is not surprising that a sinister licence is creeping into the sphere of sexual morality, that the moral implications of industrial and economic life are nebulous and destitute of reliable definition, when the Church is paralysed in its effective witness to Christian truth by the ignorance of Christian people as to the very fundamentals of their faith. The average professing Christian, confronted with modern problems,

seems quite at a loss what to do with Christ, or how to apply Him to human life. The Bible to-day is largely an unread book, the religious teaching of the young can hardly be said any longer to form a feature of domestic life, the fire has burned low on the family altar, and in many of our schools the smatterings of scriptural knowledge which are provided for the consumption of the ordinary scholar are wholly insufficient to give birth to any enduring loyalty to the Church after the years of school are ended, and indeed cannot be regarded as creative of much else than intellectual confusion.

This ignorance of the teachings of Christ, and, too, of the doctrines of Christianity, is, together with its offspring of uncertainty and mistrust of all that Christianity proclaims, perhaps not less marked among those who still give allegiance to the Church than among those who do not. It is the gravest problem of our times, and, unless checked by some efficient counteractive, will find us sooner or later precipitated all unequipped into a deadly struggle with the purely materialistic interpretation of life and the universe which is gaining for itself a disturbing prominence and is undermining those sanctions of morality and human intercourse upon which a stable and ordered society must depend.

V

If you accept the definition of the Church which I gave you earlier, you must also accept that Christianity and the Church stand or fall together. In the light of history and experience, to deny this seems to me to be only silly. Now, the question of church attendance is gravely exercising many earnest people these days. Despite the fact that there is in evidence a widespread though often critical and detached interest in religion in general, this intellectual curiosity strangely enough coincides with a marked indifference on the part of many who are by no means hostile to Christianity, and are indeed members of the Church, towards attendance

at the public worship of the sanctuary. We must not forget that though that disposition to discuss religion and the ultimate things which is so universal is of importance, nevertheless religion considered from the point of view of dialectics or academic theorisation is very far removed from religion as a living faith. The advent of the motor car, the week-end habit, and the disposition to turn Sunday into a day of purely secular recreation, has had a markedly weakening effect on the loyalty of many people towards their Church. Well, we ought to think this matter over carefully in the light of the faith which we profess.

Do we believe in the Church as I have defined it? If we do not accept this definition, then frankly we are quite entitled to view the matter of church attendance largely from the standpoint of mere personal inclination. If we do accept my definition, however, we cannot dissociate ourselves from the personal obligations in which we are involved through our membership of the Church. For twenty centuries the Christian society has met in the fellowship of corporate worship on the first day of the week. It is called the Lord's day, since on it Christ rose from the dead. The Church declares it to be not only the religious but the social duty of its members thus to assemble themselves together, that as a united brotherhood they may offer up the sacrifice of praise and prayer to God, hear His word, and listen to the declaration of His gospel. On the loyal observance of this duty by its individual members the very life of the society rests. If you abolish corporate worship, the organisation of the Christian Church must inevitably collapse. Christ was adamant on the responsibility which the individual owes to the brotherhood. No man liveth to himself alone, and no member of the Church can take to himself the liberty which he denies to others.

So that when on the morning of the Lord's Day some professing Christian who is not hindered by sound reasons turns a deaf ear to the clangour of the temple bells calling the faithful to prayer, and decides to spend

the forenoon lounging by his own fireside, or goes off for the day in his motor car with his golf-sticks, I would ask him as he does so to repeat to himself that confession of belief to which he is pledged, "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church." Moreover, I would ask him to be logical and to pursue his statement further. I would ask him to say not only "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church," but "Believing in it as I do, I also am of opinion that every member of it this day is justified in doing what I myself am doing, and therefore I am willing that every temple should be empty and that God throughout His Church should find Himself deserted and alone." Should he hesitate to say this, then has he a right to absent himself from the brotherhood without valid reason? If he cannot say this in honesty, then does it not follow that he does violence to his conscience? In his heart he must know that loyalty to the Christian society of which he is a member demands that he ought to be with the brotherhood assembled in the place of common worship. In the vexed question of Sunday observance the Church should desist from telling people what they ought not to do, and concentrate on telling them those things they ought to do. The duty of a Christian who accepts the orthodox doctrine of the Church is to be present at divine worship in the temple on the Lord's Day, and to use its remaining hours as he believes Christ would wish him to use them.

We are told that many persons are driven from Church attendance because of the indifferent preaching capacity of the clergy, whose sermons frequently are such as afford no stimulus to the mind of the average man. It must be admitted that church services are often lacking in reality and can be deplorably dull. But when I consider the type of modern fiction which achieves the rank of being a best-seller, or what are the cinema films and plays which are the most popular with the masses—in short, what is the openly demonstrated standard of taste in literature, art, and music

in Scotland whence I come, whose national orchestra is only preserved from bankruptcy and collapse by the loyalty of a handful of guarantors, which cannot support a national theatre, and whose Royal Academy's centenary exhibition was disgracefully neglected,—I am not deeply impressed by the complaint of the man in the street that the sermon in his church on Sunday morning is such as to move him to an intellectual revolt.

If the Church has not always been true to its own message, if by threats of the penalties of hell and promises of the bliss of heaven she has sought to dragoon or cajole mankind into obedience and submission to laws, observances, and practices of her organisation, if at times she has exalted the welfare of the institution itself above the mind of her Lord, yet with all her failings she has maintained alive in the earth the idealism of a kingdom which is not of this world. Towards that she points the eyes of the human race. It is, she insists, the only reality, the only good. In it alone can be found a permanent satisfaction for the aspirations and desires of the heart. If the tabernacle of this earthly house be dissolved, we have an house of God not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. To this appeal all that is best in human nature has invariably responded. Those who have been the lights of the world have been such as looked for a city which had foundations and counted the world well lost if that were the price of its discovery. On their souls the spell of the eternal was cast. A vision came to them brighter than any that this world can afford, and they had to follow the gleam.

Yes, we may say, but these are the children of dreams, and they have little to do with us. Jesus Christ says to us that these are the children of God, and have everything to do with us. They call us to their fellowship and tell us that we can and must share it in the midst of that humdrum routine we call our daily experience. They tell us that this city is a reality and that here and now we qualify for its citizenship. They

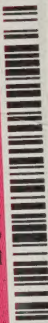
tell us further that it is peopled by those who have committed themselves to Christ's interpretation of human life and conduct, having weighed the ultimate values of the world and the flesh as against those which pertain to the will and nature of God.

The power of the Holy Spirit still exercises its mighty sway if the heart can be opened to its pleading. This you must know from your own personal life, because the working of the Spirit relies in the last resort for its evidence on the inward experience of individuals. Does your own past not hold remembered moments when the dry bones of your past failures, disappointments, or sins were revived and clothed upon with a newness of life by the breath of the Holy Ghost? At crucial points in our moral and spiritual life we undoubtedly experience a mysterious prompting which if followed leads us to the truth. None of us, in reviewing the days that are gone, can say that we ever have been left without some light from heaven. Are we not often nerved to a strength, a courage, a resoluteness, a capacity for sacrifice, infinitely beyond anything of which we had believed ourselves capable? Amid the clash and conflict of our desires with our duties, does not the way that leadeth unto life often unfold before us with a strange illumination for which we can give no adequate reason? This mystic influence invades each human life, sometimes in sorrow, sometimes when the cup of joy is full, sometimes on the heights of triumph, sometimes in the valleys of defeat, for the Spirit bloweth as it listeth, and no man knows why or whence or how. But none of us can deny the frequent experience of a thrilling certainty that we are greater than we know, that there are ideals in life worth fighting for, that our being in the world has a great significance, that God lives, and cares, and loves.

Yes, there are moments when on the dry bones in the valley of human life there comes the breath from the four winds infusing a new life into slain hopes, and sleeping aspirations, and lost treasures, and withered

flowers, and disappointments, griefs, and regrets, and blending time and eternity into a unity in which our souls find their beginning and their end in God. Let it then be ours to make a more sincere effort so to order and discipline our hearts and minds, and so to try to know the will of God towards us, as Jesus has revealed it, that when the Holy Spirit speaks we shall both hear and understand and by God's grace have power to answer in obedience. Let us strive more earnestly to appreciate the meaning of our membership in the Church of God and the privilege and responsibility such membership brings with it, that we may more truly love the brotherhood and seek its good. The desultory and imperfect allegiance which many of us give is not worthy of those on whom God has bestowed hearts to love and minds to think, and who can thereby appreciate the nature and character of that society which our Lord established on the earth, and which He has promised to protect unto the end of time.

Concerning which, and concerning all things, let our prayer to-day be, *Veni, Creator Spiritus!* Come, Holy Spirit, come, and quicken us all to newness of life. Come, breathe on the young who are standing in the dawn, and teach them to know and love and desire the beautiful, the good, the true. Come to those who bear the heat and burden of the day, and move them to new enthusiasms, to courage, and to faith. Touch the hard and frozen hearts, the rigid spirits, the cold and chilly natures, the stubborn and unbending wills, and warm them to charity, love, and peace. Yea, come to those for whom the shadows are deepening and the voices of the world must soon fade into silence : grant them the benediction of God's peace, and make the darkness light about them.



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